Ticknor's Paper Series
No. 45 *Issued Semi-Monthly* *Oct. 6, 1888*

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 09932 635 5

Doctor Ben

BY

ORLANDO WITHERSPOON

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge

Entered at the Post Office at Boston as Second-Class Matter

Single Numbers, 50 cents
Annual Subscription (24 numbers), $12.00

New Stories

CALEB WEST, MASTER DIVER

By F. Hopkinson Smith, author of "Gondola Days," "Tom Grogan," etc. Illustrated by Malcolm Fraser and Arthur I. Keller. 12mo, $1.50.

A story of notably sound and careful construction. . . . It is essentially an epic of hard, honest, capable work by workmen of the good, old-fashioned type who are not afraid of toil and peril, and who would care more for doing a piece of work well and adequately than for being paid for it. . . . Its interest is deep and genuine. — *The Outlook* (New York).

PENELOPE'S PROGRESS

By Kate Douglas Wiggin, author of "The Birds' Christmas Carol," "Timothy's Quest," etc. In unique Scottish binding. 16mo, $1.25.

We succumb at once to her bright, vivacious, unconventional style, her wit that is never rollicking, her humor that is never broad, but refined and tender. — *Christian World* (London).

STORIES OF THE CHEROKEE HILLS

By Maurice Thompson, author of "A Tallahassee Girl," etc. With 8 full-page illustrations by E. W. Kemble. 12mo, $1.50.

The author has rare abilities for this sort of work, and is at his best in these pages. The local peculiarities of his characters, in their methods of thought and their dialect especially, are made very vivid; and the book abounds in humor as well as in graver attractions. — *The Congregationalist* (Boston).

TALES OF THE HOME FOLKS IN PEACE AND WAR

By Joel Chandler Harris, author of "Uncle Remus" books, etc. Illustrated. 12mo, $1.50.

Mr. Harris is quite at his best in these stories. — *The Critic* (New York).

FROM THE OTHER SIDE

Stories of Transatlantic Travel. By Henry B. Fuller, author of "The Cliff Dwellers," "The Chevalier of Pensieri-Vani," etc. 16mo, $1.25.

There is a delicate charm about the literary craftsmanship of Mr. Fuller, but it has never been exercised with so much fascination as in these four stories of European travel. — *Indianapolis News.*

THE STORY OF LITTLE JANE AND ME

A charming story of girl-life in New York fifty years ago. By M. E. With Frontispiece Illustration. Square 12mo, $1.00.

This is a dear, sweet, old-fashioned story, as quaint as the portrait of the two little sisters in the antiquated locket which forms the frontispiece of the story. . . . All lovers of childhood will find it charming. . . . This bright and lovely story is really a true one and is so appealing, so, by turns, droll and pathetic, that it goes straight to one's heart, in the most winning way. — *Portland Press.*

DOROTHY DEANE

A Christmas Story for Girls. By Ellen Olney Kirk, author of "The Story of Margaret Kent," etc. With illustrations. 16mo, $1.25.

The heroine is a delightful creation as well as a real little girl, as the little people who read this charming story will understand. The gravity of Dorothy and her little friends is as delightful as their fun, and both the actuality and the humor of the book make it very good and genuine. — *Herald* (Utica, N. Y.).

Until the children who shall read "Dorothy Deane" shall be grown up, they will not understand how lucky they are. — *New York Times.*

STORIES IN LIGHT AND SHADOW

By Bret Harte, author of "The Luck of Roaring Camp," "Clarence," etc. 16mo, $1.25.

Sold by all Booksellers. Sent, postpaid, by

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & COMPANY, Boston

11 East 17th Street, New York

DOCTOR BEN

AN

EPISODE IN THE LIFE OF A FORTUNATE UNFORTUNATE

BY

ORLANDO WITHERSPOON

BOSTON
TICKNOR AND COMPANY
211 Tremont Street

* REFERENCE LIBRARY * HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO. * BOSTON, MASS. *
and this book may not leave the Office
must be returned within days
Archive
Collection

Copyright, 1882,
By JAMES R. OSGOOD AND COMPANY.

All rights reserved.

Press of
S. J. PARKHILL & CO.,
Boston.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER		PAGE
PROLOGUE	— Doctor Ben to the Reader .	iii
I.	A Fair Beginning	1
II.	Dies Jucundus	17
III.	Dies Horrendus	24
IV.	A Re-adjustment	36
V.	Subtilties, Good, Bad, and Indifferent,	47
VI.	Thomas Macrae	57
VII.	Temptations	68
VIII.	The Tempted turned Tempter . .	82
IX.	Si Kimber's Place	91
X.	An Unholy Compact	104
XI.	*a.* Into Darkness. *b.* Into Light . .	118
XII.	Dr. Bushwick	131
XIII.	Hickory Hall	141
XIV.	New Patients and Old	152
XV.	Bethlehem — Bedlam	164
XVI.	Doctor Ben	175
XVII.	Carney Dugan	185
XVIII.	At Elmswoods	200
XIX.	The Alderney	210
XX.	Changes	222

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXI.	Brought to Bay	235
XXII.	Almost	244
XXIII.	Symposia	252
XXIV.	A Mere Peep at Dr. Peterson's Philosophy	266
XXV.	Bly Folliss's Parlors	278
XXVI.	Several Stories in One	289
XXVII.	A Clashing of Contrary Wills	297
XXVIII.	Confessions	308
XXIX.	Another Day, Thomas!	320
XXX.	A Race	330
XXXI.	The First Arrival	343
XXXII.	The Gorge	352
XXXIII.	The Break	365
XXXIV.	Comfort Lodge at Last	374
EPILOGUE—	The Author to the Reader	381

"DOCTOR BEN" TO THE READER.

"GENTLE reader, I presume thou wilt be very inquisitive to know what antic or personate actor this is, that so insolently intrudes upon this common theatre, . . . arrogating another man's name; whence he is, why he doth it, and what he hath to say. . . .

If I be urged, I will as readily reply as that Egyptian in Plutarch, when a curious fellow would needs know what he had in his basket: 'Quem vides velatam, quid inquiris in rem absconditam?'

Seek not after that which is hid; . . . suppose the Man in the Moon, or whom thou wilt. . . ."

DEMOCRITUS JUNIOR.

DOCTOR BEN.

CHAPTER I.

A FAIR BEGINNING.

WHEN you have reached the western end of Barony Street, in the town of Millington, Province of Ontario, take the road to the right, follow it a little less than a mile up the hill, and, the moment you reach the table-land above, you will find spread out before you an extensive enclosure of mingled lawn, woodland, and farm. From the unoffensively architectural entrance to this enclosure, a long winding avenue will bring you, first, to a great circle of greensward; then, by one of its now two branches, to an imposing but not over-large dwelling, known far and wide as Elmswoods House. The other fork of this avenue leads you to the upper, or northern, portion of the enclosure, narrowing gradually, and at last, just before taking a final sweep around a bed of flowers and returning to itself, passes at a carriage-breadth the steps of a less elaborate structure, equally well known as Comfort Lodge.

In Elmswoods House dwell two aged persons, man

and wife, with a widowed friend whose blood is not akin to theirs, but with whom, in all that goes to make up perfect unity, they maintain a brotherly and sisterly relation.

In Comfort Lodge live a couple whose two children bear witness to some years of wedded life. But the dew of youth is still upon this couple, — a grave, sobered youth. Something in their carriage, their manner, their speech, gives you to understand that these two have not had the ordinary and common experience of men and women. They laugh as gayly, chat as earnestly, entertain as handsomely, as other people. You have no constraint in their presence, no fear. No uneasy apprehensions make you regret your coming to Comfort Lodge. You will take away with you many pleasant impressions, chiefest of all a sweet and inspiring memory of the never-flickering love of this man and wife.

What is it, then, that spreads around Comfort Lodge such a strange perfume? What is it that makes Comfort Lodge so different from other young people's homes?

Of one thing you may be sure. Bring Ephraim Hollins and his wife and Mrs. Hartley over from the great House to dine, or to pass an evening, with the Lodge family, and you might search the whole earth without finding a happier company.

And of this, also. Go down into Millington, and make inquiry about Mr. and Mrs. Ben Hollins of Comfort Lodge, and you will see your listener's eye — be he rich or poor — brighten as he opens his lips to

utter praises which have fallen from those lips a hundred times before.

Perhaps at last you will manage to condense the indefinite feeling and the unshaped thought, to catch a drop of the strange perfume; and you hold these up to view, and ask, What is it, then? And some one — almost any one in Millington — will answer, There was something in their young life, up there, sir, that was worse than death, — harder to bear than any trial you or I have ever had; an episode, sir, of four years' duration, with sorrow enough for a lifetime crowded into that small space.

There have been visitors at Millington whose curiosity was so aroused by such replies that they set out at once to seek for more information; and we all know how, in the lapse of time, a true tale becomes literally covered with barnacles, — not necessarily of falsehood, for no one in Millington would willingly tell a falsehood about Ben Hollins, but barnacles of imagination. Already there have come into the popular accounts of Ben's troubles a half-dozen interloping stories, all greatly to Ben's credit, to be sure, but none of them exactly true.

The growing propensity of well-meaning people to unconsciously enlarge Ben Hollins's history eventually led to the gathering of several manuscripts, covering various periods of his life. These are preserved with great care, and are duly labelled and numbered, thus: —

I. Ephraim Hollins's Account.

II. Mr. Bly Folliss's Recollections.

III. Dr. Peterson's Record.
IV. Betty Hartley's Diary.
V. Ben's own Papers.

This narrative of ours will be largely made up of selections from all these. The first one in order is the one written by Ben's father. It is voluminous; and, if Ben should ever become a great man, it would be of inestimable value to his biographer. For our purpose it is better to condense its many pages concerning Ben's childhood and early youth into as small a space as shall suffice to convey some idea of the man with whom we are dealing.

Having married rather late in life, Ephraim Hollins found himself, at the age of forty, the father of a son, and, as if some good angel was appointed to provide for the child, the custodian of a rapidly increasing fortune.

For a number of years Ephraim Hollins had been proprietor of the mills which gave a name to the town. He had seen days of prosperity and days of tribulation. At times he was thought to be sufficiently well off; again, he was known to be struggling against adverse influences. But about the time of Ben's birth he entered upon an unruffled career of success. New ambitions and projects came into his view, all having reference to Ben. The snug little nest by the river-bank began to look small and paltry; and the Elmswoods property was bought, and the house planned and built.

Here Ben grew up, a boy in whom sturdiness and refinement mingled together in such a fashion as to

finally produce a notable youth. I say *finally*, for Ben did not become president of the boy-republic in Millington until after a lengthy canvass. There were other rich men and rich men's sons in and about Millington; there were poor men's sons, too, whose muscle was as good as Ben's, and whose brains were not to be sneered at; and the Hon. Simon Budger's boys plumed themselves greatly on the almost baronial style which their father maintained in his grand home out on the Clare road, and upon the fact that he had been in Parliament, and even in the ministry.

But eventually Ben outstripped the Budger boys, and achieved first place. For manliness, for diligence in all he undertook, above all for his uniform courtesy and helpfulness to rich and poor alike, Ben became something more than *popular*. The people loved him, not less in Dublin Lane than in Victoria Square and Barony Street.

Of course there were prophets in Millington, — what small town was ever without them? — and they mapped out Ben's future as only prophets can. Old Sandy Dart, who had been at the mills ever since the first spade was put into the ground, worked his vaticinations up from point to point, as Ben's excellences increased; and at last, one evening at the "Falmouth Castle," bringing his fist down upon the table in a way to make the other men's teeth chatter, exclaimed, with a stammer, "Ah-h-ll b'b'bat ye, anny o' ye or all o' ye, thut that b'b'b'y'll be goovnor gin'l o' Can'da; now *I will*, — ah'll l'l'lay a t't'tan-pun noat on it."

At seventeen Ben was ready for college, but to col-

lege he was not destined to go; for of a sudden his father awoke to the knowledge that Ben was not far off from manhood, and he, too, took to prophesying, — not to betting ten-pound notes on glaring impossibilities, not to feeding his imagination with pictures of his beloved son in the character of a modern Aladdin, but to the more practical work of building up an intelligent *prophasis* based upon facts.

Mr. Hollins had sometimes thought of Ben as a lawyer, a clergyman, a physician; but the little courts and churches and hospitals wherein he placed his son all fell to pieces, and it was Ben himself who knocked them over.

"Father," he said, "why can't I go into the mills?"

"You shall," replied the elder one. "You shall if you wish to. But, if business is to be your career, then I say let the colleges alone."

"So do I," said Ben. "The office will be the best college for me."

"Not so fast, not so fast, my son," interposed Mr. Hollins. "There is a college, after all, where a three-years course will give you the best education for a business man."

"Where is that?" asked Ben.

"All over the civilized world," was the reply. "Go to every great commercial city in England and throughout Europe; visit the States, see the great cities there, the manufacturing towns of New England and New York especially. Ben, there is study enough before you for years; and for the first one we will travel together."

Instantly the whole household at Elmswoods felt that a crisis had been arrived at; and the word was passed from tongue to tongue that "Master Ben is going abroad!" "Ben Hollins is to travel for three years!"

It was, on the whole, a grand college — rather an university — that Ben spent his three years in. Whether he graduated "*primus*," "*cum honore*," or not, the records are silent; but at all events he returned to Millington quite a bachelor of arts, and was received by his old friends and fellow-citizens as enthusiastically as if he had brought off all the prizes.

And now, at the age of twenty, Ben's only thought was to settle down to business. He not only did his portion of work in the office, but he ferreted out the secrets of the engine-room, he established himself on a familiar footing with every loom, he knew the contents of the storerooms and the methods pursued in the packing room, — in a word, he mastered all the details of a great business.

Not a thought came to Ben, as yet, of elbowing his father out; not a suspicion that the older man was ever to retire, and leave him to be the head of all this industrial hive. But the elder one had this very end in view, and deliberately planned it all. The sixties tell upon a man who has been long engaged in active and widely extended business; and as Ephraim Hollins compared his own gray hairs and wrinkled hands with Ben's young, stalwart form, and with his fresh, bright face, he smiled, and said with satisfaction, "The business of 'Hollins' will go on."

Lightly we pass over this year of Ben's final preparation for the grave duties of business. As we are speaking of facts, however, there remains one which it is necessary to mention.

Among Ben's playmates in childhood was one with whom he had always maintained a relation which indeed neither he nor his mate had ever defined in language, but which nevertheless bound them together very closely. In his travelling days, also, Ben had considered it as natural a proceeding to run over from the Isle of Wight to Southampton, and thence to Chistow, to see Betty Hartley and her mother, as to enter Mrs. Hartley's door in Millington: for you must know that the death of Col. Hartley, shortly after Ben set out upon his travels, rendered it necessary that his widow should visit England for a time; and, when she determined to give Betty the benefit of a tour upon the Continent, Ben went with them as far as Munich.

Now, there was not a word of love between these two. The elders looked on and smiled sometimes, being conscious, no doubt, of a great superiority over their fledglings, but there was no utterance on the subject even by them; for there were other comely bees flying about the flower in Mrs. Hartley's cottage, humming their sweetest songs, looking their best, — yes, and one of them stung at the last; stung Ben, stung Betty, stung the elder people, and was himself crushed to death.

At last came the greatest day ever seen in Millington, — Ben's twenty-first birthday. If you should ever go to Millington (you can easily do so by taking the

nine-ten train *via* Patton Junction), you will hear the people talking of it yet.

All Millington was out on that day. By eleven o'clock the north road swarmed with carriages and foot-passengers. At the house and in the grounds all ordinary rules of dress were set at defiance. Black dress-coats mingled with gray coats and brown, silks and satins with plain stuff gowns, white gloves and lavenders with bare brown hands.

The social law of uniformity was, however, fully satisfied; for every one was brim-full of enjoyment and good humor, and that was uniformity enough for such a day. Hard work some of these laboring people found it to get on through life, but now all that was overlooked. Some who had almost forgotten how to smile laughed outright to-day at every little sally of wit or good humor.

"Thou's gotten more tail t' thy coat as th' law allows of, Potreek," cried a son of "merrie England."

"An' isn't this the long-tailed day?" replied Pat.

Perhaps there was some hidden wit in this; mayhap it was only the cut of Pat's coat, or the fun that shone in his face: whatever the cause was, the company roared. So do denizens of drawing-rooms laugh immoderately over sayings whose wit is utterly blotted out with a little printer's ink; and so did even the dignified Mr. Dives of Hamilton, who happened to be passing when Pat stood in the path arrayed in a coat which possibly Goliath of Gath might have worn with grace.

Sandy Dart was present in all his glory, going hither and yon, stammering out the compliments of the day with as much importance of manner and speech as if the firm had been Hollins and Dart, and offering to lay "t't'tan-pun noats" on the "goovnor gin'lship" with a profusion which would have been seriously felt in the Bank of England had there been takers.

In the house, where "the quality" gathered, the good feeling and merriment were quite as great as outside; and what Sandy Dart was to the work-people, Mr. Alexander McKechnie, Q. C., of Montreal, was to the guests within. Mr. McKechnie has never been known to pass two minutes without rubbing his hands together; and when he speaks, his words seem to rub together. His sentences have neither beginning nor ending, save such as the imagination of his hearers can supply. In his jerky way Mr. McKechnie darted about the rooms, exclaiming, with infinite rubbing, "Madam — ah — most remarkable traits — quite singular — ah — *suaviter in modo — fortiter in re* — ah — strongly combined — astonishing!"

In all that great company there was but one person who failed to dwell upon Ben's excellences, and who saw, or pretended to see, any cloud in his future. Poor old Mother Ballam! she had given up all her dear ones — husband, daughters, sons — to that other and greater mother, whose nurses we are, — Mother Earth. She had seen her little stock of earthly goods waste away. She had been too proud to ask for help; and yet, if he had known her necessity, Ben Hollins would have compelled her to be comfortable, pride

or no pride. In brief, Mother Ballam was sick and weary; and, like some stronger and better-equipped people, she rather enjoyed her woes. She even derived a sad sort of comfort out of the last cackle of her hens as a crusty sheriff's officer drove those only relics of her better days around the corner to sell them for payment of a little debt.

The hilarity at Elmswoods Mother Ballam endured as long as her infirmities would permit; but, at last, joining a company by whom Ben's praises were being both sweetly and vigorously sung, she was moved to speak her mind.

"Fine doin's, does onybody doubt?" she cried. "Yes, a fine thing to be corrosin' a young mon's soul wi' flottery! But wait — wait till the han' o' God lays heavy on yon lad! It's the han' o' man that thinks to do these great an' joyous things. So me an' my Dannel thought, twenty-five an' thirty year agone, afore the fever come, an' the money went. I don't say but he's a fine young man, is Mister Benjamin. So was my Enoch, an' my Tummas, an' my David. W'ere be they now?"

The listeners were silenced for the moment, some of them inclined even to weep with Mother Ballam. But the presage of sorrow was quickly swept away and drowned in a blast of music from a military band; and now the air rang with the familiar strains of "Britons, strike home," "Jock o' Hazeldean," "Logie o' Buchan," and "Tight little island," and Mother Ballam was left alone.

All this time, too, pleasant sounds and odors gave

warning of that without which such occasions would be dull indeed, — the feast. May this never cease to be the custom, a part of the *morals*, of mankind! How pleasant it is to see even the philosophers forgetting their "*edimus vivere*" theories for the moment, and showing that there is something to be said on the other side as well! But the feast and all its glories we must pass in silence.

It was three o'clock when the strongest appetite was appeased; and, exactly as the hour sounded, the band struck up "Hail to the chief." Mr. Hollins made his appearance upon the wide veranda, with Ben leaning upon his arm. The visitors followed in an irregular fashion, and the crowds outside surged up towards the house.

Mr. Alexander McKechnie, Q. C., was in a terrible state of fluster. He held a roll of papers in one hand, and a pen in the other. Twice he bolted suddenly from his post at a small table near Mr. Hollins, and made a rush for the house-door, as if he had forgotten something. Both times, stopping as suddenly, he felt in several of his pockets, said, "Ah — bless me! to be sure!" and sat down again.

Finally, all this pantomimic preparation ceased, and Mr. Hollins advanced to the balcony rail. It was plain to be seen that he intended to make a speech; and any remaining doubt upon the subject was dispelled by his opening his mouth, looking quite helpless, and putting both hands into his pantaloons-pockets, — unfailing signs, throughout the Province, that all the water in the Atlantic Ocean cannot extinguish

the celebrated "yearning of the British heart to express itself without fear or favor."

Mr. Hollins's speech was a good one, but too long to be reported here. It was affectionate in its allusions to the many years the speaker had spent in building up the business of Millington; and many were the cries of "Brayvoo!" and "H'yar, h'yar!" which went up from hundreds of workingmen's throats as Mr. Hollins made his points. When he spoke of his own decline in strength and vigor, there was a mighty hush, and tears stole out from many an eye. This was wholly unpremeditated on Mr. Hollins's part, but it lent a peculiar solemnity to his finishing words.

"I am about to take my son, therefore, into partnership," said Ephraim Hollins; "and I have invited you all here to-day to witness this new step in my business life, and that I might bespeak your interest in my son's well-being, as I have educated him to care for yours."

There was a brief ceremony of reading and signing papers; and now Mr. McKechnie, Q. C., alternately taking off and putting on his gold-rimmed eyeglasses, fidgeted along to the place lately occupied by Mr. Hollins.

"Gentlemen and ladies," said he in a very finicky voice, "at least, if the ladies will excuse me: I should have put them first — ah — I have the honor — ah — to introduce you, that is — ah — to — ah — introduce *to* you Messieurs Hollins and" —

"Ah!" said irreverent Carlyle Budger, quite audibly.

"Exactly — to be sure," added Mr. McKechnie, half turning upon Carlyle.

Collecting himself quickly, as a Q. C. ought always to have the ability to do, Mr. McKechnie lifted his right hand, and waved it vigorously in the direction of the town. Thither all eyes were directed at once. The afternoon sun was shining warmly down upon the town, which lay some distance below them; and from the cupola of the central mill floated a banner of white, with the legend "Hollins & Son."

"Wot be you a-booin' at, Missus Ballam?" asked Sandy Dart of that poor old dame.

"My Dannel an' my Tummas."

And of all that assemblage none but Mrs. Ballam refused to join in the shouts, and waving of kerchiefs, shawls, and bonnets, with which the popular joy of the moment was attested.

Cheer upon cheer now rent the air; while in one little lull there came from the town a subdued, distant murmur.

"The railroad-men are cheering," said some one; and there went back a roar as of a triumphant army.

For an hour after this the rich and poor mingled together in the grounds. What a sight it was to see the good old bishop moving about among "all sorts and conditions of men," his black silk stockings covering legs so slight and thin that you could not help thinking that it was a mercy his body was cut upon so small a pattern also! and how a little knot of "the quality" enjoyed it when he told them of his first visit to "the States!"

"And how did the 'Mericans treat you, me Lord?" asked one.

"Treatment! Oh! the visiting was gude eneuch, and the eating. But they tritted us like harses: they gev us naething but wather to drink."

And the venerable archdeacon, too, how he towered up by the side of the little bishop, his face one vast smile, his tongue supplied with pleasant words, and one for every comer!

At four o'clock carriages began to rattle down the avenue with guests from abroad, who desired to catch the afternoon-express westward; and, with that propensity to "follow the leader" which is characteristic of humanity, a tide of men and women set in toward the gates. By five the grounds were cleared, Ben and his father free from the squeezing and shaking by which well-intending people half kill those whom they congratulate; and Elmswoods resumed its wonted quiet, save for the more subdued clamor of the thirty especial guests, who had been invited to celebrate Ben's majority over a grand dinner.

It was a notable company that was gathered at this dinner, — some of the foremost men of the day from both provinces, an ex-president of the United States, several officers, lawyers, physicians, merchants, gentlemen of leisure, and a *repli* of ladies, including some of the brightest girls and the most dignified dames known in all that country.

The manuscript from which these facts are drawn is silent respecting the details of this dinner, — its *menu*, its conversations, its toasts, — and the thread

of narrative takes up Ben on the stroke of eight, just as he is taking advantage of the hum of conversation in the drawing-room to steal away for a little respite and reflection.

CHAPTER II.

DIES JUCUNDUS.

LEAVING the house by one of its more private exits, Ben went deliberately down a winding path towards a clump of Norway pines, where he thought to find seclusion in a rustic summer-house. Arriving there in the semi-darkness, and occupied as he was with his own thoughts, Ben did not at once perceive a figure which arose from one of the benches in a quick, startled way; but a sound, which might have been either a sigh, a sob, or merely an exclamation, aroused him. He peered into the gloom doubtfully, made a quick movement towards the figure, and cried, "Why, Betty! you here? — and alone?"

"Yes, sir," replied a trembling voice.

"What's the matter, Betty? and why do you say 'sir' to me? What has happened to drive you away off here? Has any one disturbed you up at the house?"

"Yes, — no, I mean. I don't know what is the matter; and you need not have come here after me."

Ben had this sentence all framed for a reply, — "I did not come here after you," — but thought better of it, threw the sentence away, and substituted, —

"I am very glad I did come, Betty; and now shall I go to the house and send your mother to you?"

"Mercy on us!" thought Betty Hartley. "If mamma comes, what shall I do then?" But she only said, "No, please, Mr. Benjamin. I don't want mamma, or — or any one else. I shall go up to the house now."

Poor Ben began to feel very miserable, as we all do at times when we have not philosophy enough to fathom the cause of our misery.

"Let me go and get you some cologne," he said, "or some salts, or something."

The possibility of a fainting scene dawned upon Ben, but his ideas of restoratives were very limited.

"Mayn't I get you a cup of tea?" he asked, in a burst of inspiration. "There's some splendid coffee too; and you took none after dinner, — I know you didn't, for I was watching. How would you like a glass of sherry, or port, or some muscatel? Oh, good gracious!"

This exclamation, being translated from thought-language into full grammatical form, meant, "What am I going to do now?" for Betty had given way under Ben's profuse hospitality, and had burst into tears.

And the simple truth was, that the girl was wrought up to a high pitch of nervousness, and had come out of doors to overcome it. By one of those accidents which the most modest of maidens cannot foresee or avoid, Ben had pounced upon her at her weakest, and she was "as a bird in the hands of the fowler."

Could she help it? Could she help acknowledging to herself, all this happy day, that Ben Hollins was more to her than all the world beside? No, — and would not try to; would have scorned her best friend if that friend had uttered one word against Ben Hollins. She was proud of Ben, and dared not manifest her pride. She recalled a thousand tendernesses of Ben's, and they all went to substantiate a claim on her own part to some share in the glories of the day; but how people would laugh if they should hear her say so! Ben himself would turn against her for it! This young and tender creature, therefore, was rent and torn. Her nerve-centres were all disordered, and strings of those sensitive feelers which run hither and yon through our bodies were hanging and fluttering in her flesh like a mass of tangled telegraph-wires after a storm.

Tea! coffee! sherry! sal-ammonia! Fiddlesticks! what Betty needed was the very strongest drink man ever takes, — nectar, made of heart's blood, mingled with tears and sweet protestations, brewed for weeks and weeks, and at last, as the recipes say, brought to a boil for just one instant, and then quaffed at once, before one atom or sparkle of its ethereal *vis* is gone. That is the elixir of love.

Between these two the brewing had been going on long enough. Let us see how they managed the boiling.

The first thing was, of course, to put fuel on the fire, which Ben did very happily.

"I shall go for Mary Armstrong, then, Betty, and some of the other girls," he said.

"Of all things under the sun!" thought Betty. Why, those girls would read her inmost soul in one second. They would delight in taking hold of those poor dangling nerves, and pulling and twisting upon them. Mary Armstrong, indeed! with her way of jumping at conclusions! And Betty knew, moreover, that Mary Armstrong herself was looking Ben's way, and was already evil-disposed towards all rivals; and therefore a series of dissolving views passed before her, representing all sorts of explosions, feminine tantrums, jealousies, gossipings, and all the other impish things which follow in the wake of true love discovered. She cried out eagerly, therefore, "No, Mr. Hollins, please let me go away. I can go around by the garden-gate, and go home."

"Can you, indeed?" said Ben. "Not at this time of night."

Perhaps Ben was predestined to be a lunatic; for by this time the moon was up, high in the sky, and very near the full. Luna happened to have been hidden behind a great cloud which stretched along the eastern sky; but now, just as they were speaking, out she popped into clear space, flooding these two babes with light. And what a picture they presented! — Betty Hartley, with her face all bedaubed with tears, and Ben Hollins, stricken dumb, to all appearance.

Of a sudden he chose to be angry with this poor, trembling girl.

"I won't be called Mr. Hollins, — at least not by you, Betty," he blurted out.

"Please, Mr. Benjamin" —

"No, nor Mr. Benjamin either. Why can't you call me Ben, as you always have? I wish they had let me alone, with all their gimcracks about my being a man."

Then came an awful silence, — the man in the moon grinning at them from ear to ear; and that flood of light set Ben to thinking, — thinking of moonlight walks, moonlight rides, moonlight sails upon the river, all with Betty; of many a romp and play, when they were children; of day-thoughts and night-dreams in which she was his queen; of the many times he had asked himself, in amusement and in work, whether his occupation would stand the test of Betty Hartley's judgment.

He had often taken a peep at a remote future, and wondered if he and Betty would ever be like his father and mother, sitting together of an evening just as if they had always lived under the same roof. He had laughed aloud once at the thought of a house in which he should be master, and a certain lady with a fair, bright face should come to him wreathed in smiles, and — oh, reddening impossibility! — kiss him as he came in at the door, as he had seen his mother kiss Ephraim Hollins; but he had never come to the framing of all this in words.

Once, indeed, he had risen in the night with a great purpose in his mind, and was half-inclined to sit up until daylight should give him the opportunity to carry it out. It was, to go down to Mrs. Hartley's, and say, "I have come for Betty, Mrs. Hartley. We will step up to Golder's to buy a ring, and stop at Gant's for some new gloves; and, if you could meet us at the

church at half-past ten, Dr. Dick will get through the ceremony in no time." But Ben grew sleepy in a few minutes, and went back to bed and to dreamless slumbers.

All these things, the earnest and the absurd alike, he conned over again now; and at the very end of his reflections the man in the moon, or some æolian aid, separating two vine-branches, let in upon Betty's face another covering of light, as if to say, "Now look at her! See what you have done to the prettiest face in all the world!"

Selfish boy-man! Much he cared for Betty's facial disorder! If any thing, he rather gloried in it; and, much as she needed comforting, he deliberately proposed that she should comfort him.

"Why, Betty," said he piteously, "you are not going to be the first to desert me, are you? Just as I have attained my majority, and mean to try to make every one happy, you are not going to make me miserable, *are* you?"

Too much for Betty. She stood irresolute, picking at her handkerchief, eyes and chest swelling with the on-coming flood. Ben, too, had mounted a whirlwind, thinking, possibly, that it was only an innocent hobby-horse, and he was in a region of romance and glory before he knew it; and, as he felt himself going, he reached out for Betty's hand, seized it firmly, and dragged her up with him.

There! it was all over. Neither of them had said a word about love, or any silly stuff of that sort; but here they were, loving each other, — what extrava-

gant phrase can be employed to tell how deeply, how earnestly, how solemnly?

Blessed be woman! How easy it is for her, with a wave of the hand, with the shedding of a tear, with a smile or a word, to solve the perplexities of stupid, clumsy man! An unfortunate at my side exclaims, "Cursed be woman! How easy it is for woman, with a wave of the hand and all the rest of it, to drive perplexed man into deeper perplexity and to utter ruin!"

Perhaps so, friend. And practically, now that you have overthrown my enthusiasm, very likely the truth does lie somewhere between the blessing and the curse; but in Betty Hartley's case it was solely a blessing that Ben Hollins fell into her hands.

"Listen, Ben," said Betty.

Strains of music were floating indistinctly down to them from the most distant part of the house. Ben declared that it was "The Wedding March," and clapped his hands gently at the good omen. But Betty upset this little piece of superstition very speedily, insisting that the band was only playing "The Blue Bells of Scotland." And yet Ben was not altogether to blame. The chord-notes were strongest to his ear, and reminded him of "The Wedding March," while Betty's hearing took in the melody from cornet and piccolo.

Oh that these two might go through life something after this same fashion! Ben grasping and holding the chords, the strong foundations upon which life's harmonies are built up, Betty making them tuneful and precious with wifely melody!

God bless these two! God pity these two!

CHAPTER III.

DIES HORRENDUS.

THAT very night the elders were taken into Ben's and Betty's confidence; and before another sunset, the terms of a life-long alliance were settled.

But there were beatings of heart in some other quarters. Poor Rosie Montrose! Her widow's weeds seemed to be blacker than ever. Poor Mary Armstrong! Poor Joe Craughton! Poor Cleve Maitland! Poor — all the rest of the disappointed ones!

There is but one of all that company of aspirants who needs particular mention here. He was the instrument of so much evil, — and of some good too, as it happened, — that a bit of his history must here be given, and more hereafter. Thomas Macrae was a young law-student of brilliant parts, with something of a fortune, thoroughly well-educated, of polished manners, a genial companion, and withal Ben's most intimate friend. But he had been utterly blind to the possibility of such an event as Betty Hartley's becoming Mrs. Hollins, — blind with that cupidic cataract which is no uncommon disease. He had been patiently waiting for his own time to say the one sweet thing to Betty, and dreamed and thought of her answer as an ultimate "yes." He could feel, and see, that the day had not

yet come; but he would wait. A chance word here and there, a misinterpreted look, an exaggerated expression, gave him courage, just so surely as Betty's coldness daunted him. For a whole year and more he had kept up this quiet pursuit of his one great object. And now that object was gone!

But this was no boy, — no simpleton, no weeping, sentimental youth. He shouldered his load of vexation like a man, and tried to live it down.

Ben and Betty now settled into a quiet, orderly course of loving and waiting, — waiting for the lapse of a year, which had been agreed upon by all concerned as a sufficient and necessary time for Ben to become thoroughly habituated to his responsibilities in the business of "Hollins and Son," and for Betty to make preparations for her wifehood. And, as matters were to be in the near future, it was well for these two that they had so much in common, similar tastes, similar ideas of life. For a time was rapidly approaching when it would have been an awful retrospect for Betty, if she had been compelled to dwell upon a ghastly procession of quarrels and disagreements. Instead of such torment, she had the sweet recollection of a year of perfect peace.

On Ben's part, it was a year of simple fidelity to the trusts reposed in him, a year during which he and his father were gradually changing places.

In the early autumn, the sound of axes and hammers began to be heard at Elmswoods. Wagon-loads of earth were removed, and other wagon-loads of

stone and bricks and timber and other paraphernalia of building were brought in. Foot upon foot there arose to view the walls of a new dwelling. It was not to be so imposing as the great house, but took to itself, from the start, an air of comfort, and seemed to bear on every one of its four walls the announcement, "Good living here, for two young married people — and friends." Thither Ben and Betty would go together towards evening, Ben always carrying a tape-line long enough to measure the Vatican. No end of feet and inches were marked off and noted down by Ben; while Betty, sitting demurely upon a saw-horse, smiled in a satisfied way, or said, "Now, Ben, if this were to be *my* house, you know, I should do so and so." Drawing-room, dining, breakfast, and sleeping rooms, and even kitchen and store-rooms, were all measured and re-measured, with never-ending satisfaction. Occasionally there was just a suspicion of disagreement, a difference of opinion, to the extent perhaps of an eighth of an inch, as to whether it would be "the thing" to drape this or that window in blue or white, or whether the buffet would really go into such a space comfortably or not. On such occasions, the war was a brief and gentle one, and the guns were hardly loaded before the two-mouthed trumpet sounded the declaration of peace.

(Ben had a way of provoking these little disturbances merely, it is supposed, for the sake of hearing peace declared, until one day a carpenter, looking for his hammer, came suddenly upon them; whereupon Betty bridled up and said, —

"There, Ben, you were just caught making a goose of yourself, and I'm glad of it." Of course she was.)

Thus they went on, saying and doing any number of these childish things, as any other young couple would, — except, indeed, your hard-fisted people, who marry for commercial reasons; and those excessively "cultivated" ones, who regard marriage as merely one of the "*convenances*."

Winter, spring, summer, — one by one the seasons took their several places, to do their several works in the grand round of life. The spring-time set many minds to thinking, and many tongues to talking, of the coming event. It was not to be an affair for Ben's and Betty's interest only, but all Millington was concerned.

In a few weeks, thought the two B's, we shall be man and wife. We are sailing out of the barely ruffled bay of youth into the broad, open sea of life, as we sailed out of the placid river of childhood. The immensity of it caused Betty to tremble sometimes; but she remembered that Ben was to be captain of the ship, and took courage.

In the town also, both in Victoria Square and in Dublin Lane, the wedding-day grew to be the chief topic of conversation. Many were the prophesyings, many the anticipations, many the jokes cracked, more and more intense the eagerness of one and all to hear the church-bell ring, the organ peal out its wedding harmonies.

And no ear was acute enough to hear the nearing rumble of the wheels of the car of fate. Rolling on

and on it came, in its relentless progress. Wounded, crushed, and dying men were named, from distant places, and Ben and Betty pitied them, — but never dreamed of the hideous wheels flying from those far-off places to strike *them*. They had come to look upon their little castle in the woods as impregnable. Was it not guarded by lock and bolt, by any number of devices for comfort and security? Was not Love to be their warder? Was it possible for any enemy to come in and extinguish the bright new fires in "Comfort Lodge," as they had playfully, and then seriously, named the new home?

It was the first day of June. Comfort Lodge was all in readiness. The last carpet was laid, the last article of furniture, Betty's old writing-desk with "B. H." in monogram stamped upon the cover, had been moved in, and "B." was lovingly saying to "H.," "Good! you and I have become inseparable. We will admire the good taste of these young people in not disturbing our harmonious relations." The venerable archdeacon had promised to come over to perform the ceremony, and had even written out the "marriage-lines," all but signing his own name. Betty's dresses, jewels, and a hundred little flim-flams of feminine taste, every one of them "ab-so-lute-ly necessary, you know," had passed judgment. Good wishes of friends were pouring in, youths and maidens anticipating the round of dinners, receptions, garden-parties, and what not, which were to make the summer memorable. The mill-hands were full of the

subject too, and many a sly rub was administered to "Muster Bunjamun," as he made the rounds.

"Two days more!"

"Day after to-morrow!"

"To-morrow!"

This last word was uttered, no one can tell how many times, on the morning of that first day of June. In remote corners, where the news was slow in coming, you might have heard it up to one o'clock; but for the most part it was said no more after noon. The town was hushed; its eager, joyous anticipations dead and buried.

"They that go down to the sea in ships" may seek their rest at night only to be awaked by the summons to eternity as the iron giant of the ocean, wielded by careless hands or by men shamefully ignorant of seacraft, comes crashing into the sides of the frailer wooden bark. The Switzer *jäger* may taste of bitter sorrow as he returns from the hunt to find that wife, children, house, and all his worldly wealth have been swallowed up by the resistless avalanche. Sorrow may come in any of her myriad shapes, enticing in her gentleness, horrifying in her malignity. But in what one of them is she so strong and awful as when she touches her victim with the finger which distorts and confuses the brain, and makes of him either a madman or an imbecile? Then does she call Violence her brother, and Fear her sister. Then does she make a horrid feast upon living victims, gorging herself with life-blood, drinking it cup by cup, or even drop by drop, waxing fat upon helpless misery.

There! that is written as an old Roman or Greek, to whom *Dolor* or *Algos* has become an impersonation, might have written. But it is a straining exercise to write of such griefs as Ben's and Betty's, and it requires deliberation to come back to the calmer Christian standpoint. We make the effort: we reach that standpoint. We ask why it is that the sweetness of human love should thus turn to sorrow? How grand the answer that comes back to us from Calvary! Was ever love sweeter than that of the Man of Nazareth? And yet he was emphatically "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." We are in the presence of a great mystery.

These were the considerations which prevailed at Elmswoods and all over Millington on that lamentable day. But for them, that day would have been not only a *dies horrendus*, but a day so deeply, desperately horrible as to uproot more minds than one, and to change the course of more lives than one forever. An irreligious father — one of your gentry who talk glibly of liberality, and in the same breath fling sneers at the faith which underlies all that is glorious in this age and country — would have thrown himself into an impotent, silly rage, and blasphemed. Not so, however, that stalwart man, Ben Hollins's father.

One of your fine ladies, who laugh so enchantingly at all that is serious and heavenly here on earth, and who stand with such graceful *naïveté* on the very edge of danger and death, would have wrung her hands in selfish terror, shed a little torrent of selfish tears, and — fled from the man to whom she had promised her

hand and life. Not so dear Betty Hartley, who had been at a Queen's drawing-room, mind you, and had been spoken to most kindly by that gracious lady, and whose mother ranked with right honorable ladies of England, and who yet was not ashamed to bear her share in Ben's calamity as a Christian woman ought.

The mill-bells had rung out the noon signal, when a messenger was seen running up the avenue at Elmswoods. Ephraim Hollins was overlooking some garden-work near the house, and saw such urgency stamped upon the messenger's whole figure that he hastened to meet him.

"Muster Ban's broat down in storehouse wi' a knock on's hạd; dawcter says as you's to coom straightfor'a'd, Muster 'Ollins."

One instant of reflection, and they set off together for Millington. On their way the messenger told all that was known. Ben had been making some experiments in the dye-house, and had gone in person to one of the storerooms to procure a certain chemical. The men who were assisting him at the dye-house waited a full half-hour, and then made inquiry for him. No one had seen him. The storerooms were visited, and Ben was found lying upon the floor senseless, with a great heap of iron weights, and odds and ends, such as will accumulate in these places, scattered around him.

One of the porters testified that, not more than an hour before, he had seen these weights lying upon an upper shelf. A package which Ben had evidently

intended to carry away with him was found at his side; and its fellows were ranged in order on the second shelf from the top, immediately underneath the one upon which the porter had seen the weights. Doubtless, in reaching up to take this package, Ben had in some way loosened the unstable pile above, — how, no one would ever know, — and the weights had fallen upon him. That was all there was of the matter, and very little good it did to know it.

The news spread, as such news always does, and a score of men were on the spot at once. One was despatched for a surgeon, another for Mr. Hollins. By the time the latter arrived, the former had made a close examination. Not a bone was broken, not a drop of blood shed. Restoratives had been administered, but without effect. A proposal from some of the men to carry Ben home was vetoed by the surgeon emphatically. A bed was quickly brought over from "the Royal," therefore, and Ben placed upon it: the room was cleared of all but four or five quiet, sensible fellows, and surgeon Braddock sat down to wait and watch. Again and again he arose to follow up the leading of some suggestion which came from his medical knowledge and experience; again and again he retreated, baffled and anxious.

Messages went from time to time to Elmswoods and to Mrs. Hartley's, such as, "Two o'clock, — no change." "Three o'clock, — just the same." "No, you need not come: nothing can be done."

Four — five — and six o'clock came, and melted into the past. Surgeon Braddock's face remained

sphinx-like: his tongue uttered now and then an encouraging word to the suffering father; but his mind was shaping more and more clearly an apprehension of evil which had, in fact, inspired all his experiments and efforts. As evening drew on, that apprehension settled into something so like certainty, that he dreaded putting it into words; and being neither a butcher nor a quack, and loving Ben as the apple of his eye, he went out upon the landing, and shed tears of manly sorrow.

A little after six, slight muscular action set in: Ben's fingers clutched at the wrappings which had been spread over him; soon the flexors responded; the movement went on up the arm, gradually nearing the centres of life. At last Ben began to mutter:

"Tn p'ns s'."

"Le r't."

"P'r sh'l."

This was all that could be made of what he attempted to say; and the closed eyes, the limp form, — motionless save for the occasional half-convulsive movements we have already noted, — gave these mutterings an unhappy significance to the surgeon, while the unskilled, on the contrary, derived hope from them.

The medical man must sometimes assume the unwelcome office of announcing evil tidings, and he is generally the better medical man who has the courage to do this at exactly the proper time. Dr. Braddock perceived early in the evening that the time had come. It was only a question of words. But he was

no believer in the infallibility of the faculty, — that fatal rock upon which so many young doctors, by the way, split and go to pieces. He knew that Nature sometimes laughs the schools in the face by performing one of her stupendous miracles. So he reasoned, rightly enough, that it would be wiser, just now, to lay Mr. Hollins gently in the dust, and let him rise afterwards, than to set him up on a lofty pinnacle of hope, at the risk of being finally dashed to pieces. With almost womanly gentleness, therefore, he took his old friend aside, and said, "My dear friend, I think you must prepare yourself and others for the worst. You know how to be strong."

Mr. Hollins thought that the surgeon was speaking of *death;* and as they carried Ben up to Elmswoods, shortly after, he imagined, in his grief, that they were actually following him to his grave. It was an unspeakable relief to him, therefore, to look upon the calm, dignified face of the mother, and to see that his son still breathed.

Together Ephraim Hollins and his wife watched over Ben that night, with all the ardor of parental love; and this and medical skill labored as one, to bring back from the land of silence the object of their mutual solicitude.

In the morning, telegrams went abroad, calling in the aid of Dr. McCaller of Toronto, and the great Dr. Brown of "the States," and half a score of medical men within easier reach. It was now the wedding-day, — June 2; and Friday, the 3d, was appointed for the momentous consultation. At eleven o'clock

the conclave assembled. Its deliberations are of no particular consequence to us. Its conclusion is; and yet it was conveyed to Mr. Hollins in a few platitudes, which threw little light upon the darkness which he could feel, so thick and close was it.

Well! the doctors ate and drank at Mrs. Hollins's bountiful lunch-table, talked before her with a deal of very impassable Latin, a trifle of unrecognizable Greek, and enough of English to reduce the rest to something like shape and intelligibility, dispersed, and sent in their bills. And that was the last of the greatest medical consultation ever held in Millington.

CHAPTER IV.

A RE-ADJUSTMENT.

ON Sunday morning, the 5th of June, there came a change in Ben's condition. The functions of muscular life, released from the temporary lethargy induced by shock, resumed something of their former state. Ben lifted his head from the pillow, and gazed about the room with an air of one looking for familiar faces in a foreign land. One long stare he gave, beginning with his mother's portrait opposite the foot of his bed, then to the left, across the window that looked out over the rose-house roof, then along the wall to the fireplace; and there the angle of vision came to an end.

What a look! In it not a sign of recognition of any one in the room, not a smile, not a token that Ben was passing the crisis safely and coming back to the world awaiting him.

Dr. Braddock came in shortly after, and was told every minute particular, down to the shuddering sigh with which Ben sank back upon his pillow. The shading off of possibility into probability, and at last into certainty, was completed in this good surgeon's mind; and he firmly took Mr. Hollins away to the library, and said, —

"My dear friend, it is just as I feared it might be. I was willing to let you remain in suspense for a time, hoping, almost against hope to be sure, that Nature would step in to our aid, and do what we doctors may as well confess we cannot do."

"This is fatal, then, Braddock?" asked the sufferer.

"No: Ben is not going to die. In fact, I wish he was a little nearer to that; for then a struggle would take place within him, out of which I should have infinitely more hopes of his restoration. Ben will not die, but there is very little left of that bright intellect from which we all hoped such great and good achievements. What the future may do, all the doctors in creation cannot foretell; but for the present you must be content to care for Ben, much as you did in his childhood."

Dr. Braddock left it to Ephraim Hollins to break this bitter bread to his wife, and, as he left the house, said, "And, by the way, Hollins, that little girl down at Mrs. Hartley's must not feed herself upon false hopes. Will you tell her, or shall I?"

False hopes! that is what we men always say, when we are angry, or crushed with certainties. As if hope could ever be false! The very quintessence of hope is truth. Founded upon facts, it looks forward to other facts. And such hope as Betty Hartley had schooled herself in since Wednesday is so firm that all the wise saws of all the wise men cannot turn it or shake it.

When they came to tell her, — Mr. Hollins and her mother, — of the awful catastrophe of darkness which

had enveloped her lover's life, they were surprised to see her even smile. Evidently she was holding herself with a firm hand, and was aware of her feminine weakness. But there was feminine strength in her too, —a soldierly discipline such as Col. Hartley's daughter ought to have, seeing that he left no son to inherit it; and, long before they ceased saying the little nothings of such occasions, Betty was looking far away into the future.

Calmly, quietly, but with irresistible firmness, she took her stand. Every one wondered, — those who loved her, at her courage; those who are ever ready to hiss and cast venom at their neighbors, at her "foolishness."

"Two days more," said Betty to her elders, "and I should have sworn at the altar to take Ben 'for better for worse, for richer for poorer, to keep him in sickness and in health.' If this had occurred two days after marriage, would not the world have scorned me, had I turned my back upon my stricken husband, and left him in his darkness? Let me be his nurse, his guide, his companion, so much as I may. And if our sorrow should be removed, and Ben recover from this sickness" (she merely happened to say "sickness," this girl, ignorant of all Æsculapian definitions of words), "what joy will it be to see him growing day by day nearer to that end! What happiness to hear his first inquiry for me! But what misery to know of his awaking, and calling for me, only to learn that I had weakly and heartlessly deserted him!"

Thus reasoned this devoted girl, grown now in the

space of five days to a robust womanhood. And the old man listened, and took her to his breast with gratitude which was speechless for a time; until at last he said,—

"Dear daughter, you had our love without reservation: now you have something more. You shall help us to care for Ben. Perhaps he will hear your voice, and be brought back by it to life. Who knows but that his love for you may be the keynote to his recovery? If so, you are certainly the one to strike it."

On his return to Elmswoods that evening, a purpose, born of this interview with Betty, came to full being in Mr. Hollins's mind; and he lost no time in unfolding it to his wife. Nothing less than that Betty and her mother should give up the house down by the river-bank, and migrate to Elmswoods.

"For Ben's comfort?" asked the mother tearfully. "I think it will be to the comfort of us all."

By what process of argument and persuasion this project was brought to an issue, and Mrs. Hartley and Betty installed, not in Comfort Lodge indeed, but at Elmswoods house, it is unnecessary to inquire. But there were people in Millington who were not half so modest as we propose to be. Notably Miss Blandly, gossip-queen of the town. Having no occupation, Miss Blandly was always ready to interfere with those of other persons. Having no matrimonial prospects, it was her delight to mar and scarify those of younger and more attractive ladies. And in one word, and that a charitable one, having poor health, bad digestion, and many megrims, poor Miss Blandly "gave it"

to any and all who were healthier, stronger, and happier than herself. She and Mrs. Capt. Thurston, the wife of a resigned ex-artillerist who kept his rations in a gin-bottle, and his ammunition in a clay-pipe, rang the changes upon Betty's foolishness, day after day. And the best of it was, that Betty never heard one word of it.

Not a syllable of criticism came to this dear girl's ears, for the reason that she had already quite withdrawn herself from the every-day Millington life. She had entered upon a new and busy existence. The care of Ben Hollins had become her one thought. For a limited time each day, she was Ben's guide and companion, his instructress.

The task was indeed no easy one. It required all her strength, but love stripped it of many of its difficulties. At first it was a tearful business, and the overcharged heart sometimes sought vent for its fulness in bitter wailings. Then a ray of sunshine would fall upon it. The memory of better days, the recollection of hours which she and Ben had passed together reading or singing, the remembrance of subjects they had discussed, of conclusions reached, of mutual delights, — all came crowding in upon her; and out of them Betty built up a sort of pharmacopeia, from which she undertook to draw prescriptions for Ben's benefit, she to do the compounding and the administering.

For Betty had, without knowing, quite drifted into a professional attitude. She happened, as has been said, to say "sickness," in speaking of Ben's trouble.

Now, when a woman says a thing, she generally means it; and, if not before, then certainly *after* she has said it. And so Betty thought and thought of that word, "sickness;" and, the more she dwelt upon it, the more persistently she looked upon Ben as only *sick*.

Poor little girl! she had discovered, or almost discovered, what it has taken the whole human race six thousand years to define. Yes, the whole known period of man's life upon the earth may be covered advisedly. For it is easily proved, that, if Adam and Eve were not absolutely insane, they at least behaved very queerly.

Now, if any philosopher or theologian is in want of a new theory of that much-vexed subject, "the origin of evil," let him follow this out. Possibly the Darwinians could make a strong philosophical point upon this theory, in the nervous agitation which must have been suffered by the first human beings in consequence of the sudden, or even gradual, loss of those appendages which distinguished their ancestors before the metamorphosis.

Whatever ground there may be for such a theory, man is at last waking up to study and know himself; and the wise ones, doctors, psychologists, specialists, physicians, and metaphysicians, are going full tilt towards a land of paradise unveiled by the doctrine that *insanity is sickness*.

The efforts of our own specialist, Miss Betty Hartley, are now notably in our sight; and we may ask, Were they successful? Frankly, they were not. Ben grew fond of his doctress, but even that was not suffi-

cient to cure him of his malady. Nor was the docility he manifested in her company much like the old love. Alas! at times he was even irreverent. As, for instance, on one occasion when Betty and Ben were sitting together in the garden; she thinking and sewing, he trifling with blades of grass. Of a sudden a tear fell, glided down Betty's needle, and was lost in the stitch. She must needs save herself from giving way; and her voice broke out in subdued tones, and in a melody of her own making. It was Heine's "Und wussten's die Blumen" that she sang; Theodore Martin's translation of which is so full of the native beauty of the verses, that it may serve here, instead of the German: —

"If the little flowers knew how deep
Is the wound that is in my heart,
Their tears with mine they'd weep,
For a balm to ease its smart.

"If the nightingales knew how ill
And worn with woe I be,
They would cheerily carol and trill,
And all to bring joy to me.

"If they knew, every golden star,
The anguish that racks me here,
They would come from their heights afar,
To speak to me words of cheer."

Would you believe it? At the finishing of the song, Ben stood up before Betty, made a half-turn upon one heel, and, with one of those displacements of thought which are so painfully common in such cases, ex-

claimed, "Oh, yes! ha, ha! good cheer — Blue Bells of Scotland, I should say."

A very few words will suffice to define Ben's general condition at this period. Not many hours after his first awaking on the Sunday of which mention has been made, he arose from his bed, not voluntarily, but because he was bidden to do so by surgeon Braddock. And as he stood in the midst of the room, purposeless and vacant, the good surgeon applied test after test to ascertain what he might concerning his patient. Every sense, sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste, was perfect. Speech was as clear as ever; but it was distressing to listen to Ben, because the glory of speech, its logical naturalness, that invisible chord which binds it to reason, was gone, shattered. His movements, at first, were never voluntary. Direction was necessary in even the minutest detail of daily life. To sum it all up, in words which still are inadequate, but which must serve the purpose here, Ben's will was crushed, reduced to a dormant condition.

One or two physicians who visited Elmswoods during the first half-year of Ben's trouble talked a deal about "unconscious cerebration." Perhaps they expected this wise dictum to set Ben right again; but, if so, they failed.

Said Betty Hartley, "I don't believe in all that, nor in any theory which makes a living man no better than a dead one."

Said surgeon Braddock, "It makes little difference whether the cerebration may be conscious or unconscious: the life is suspended. Our Ben is wrecked.

Nothing but some hidden force of Nature can ever pull him off the rocks."

Now, surgeon Braddock was an admirable family physician. He was a learned man, after his fashion. He had the one misfortune, idiosyncrasy, or whatever it is best to call it, — that he was a pessimist. He looked upon Ben's case always and undeviatingly with no hope, but such as might be contained in the two words, "If — Nature." Living as he had for many years, in a steady round of family practice, Dr. Braddock was not wide awake to all that was going on in the outer world. He knew the asylums, but for such cases as Ben's he had a wholesome dread of them. He believed Ben to be better off at Elmswoods than in any asylum he had ever seen or heard of.

And now when Ben began to develop, to show little signs of returning will, what wonder that the good surgeon smiled, and said again and again, "If — Nature!"

And, in very truth, Nature was doing her best. And so were the anxious watchers at Elmswoods.

The house at this time wore the appearance of a school, and Ben that of a prince royal who was receiving the exclusive attention of a staff of four professors. Betty Hartley was particularly assiduous in her efforts to educate Ben, to strengthen his will, to set his thoughts in reasonable channels. It was hard work, discouraging work for the most.

And sometimes there were notable changes, glimmerings of the past, sudden inspirations of purpose,

which lighted up Ben's face, and brought momentary manliness into his carriage, — but only to die out again. The sight of Comfort Lodge, all locked and barred as it was, caused him even to speak of some detail of carpentering or furnishing; but the next hour he had forgotten the matter. Again he would recall some old affair of business, or some detail of the journey he and Betty were to have made. And in the midst of a sentence, as a sequence to this serious talk, Ben would break out in some fancy so distorted, so absurd and even ludicrous, that with the heart-ache sorely pressing them his friends would be compelled to laugh.

To a psychological student, Ben would have presented at this period an interesting study. But there were no psychological students at Elmswoods, — only four loving friends who longed and waited for something which was too distant to come at their beck.

It would serve no purpose to lengthen the record of this portion of Ben's life; and the reader must be left, therefore, to picture to himself a couple of years passed in the merest flickering of lights and shadows, — the lights growing a little brighter, but the shadows somehow deepening at the same time. Ben was gentle under all circumstances, never manifesting any tendency to those outbreaks of violent passion which sometimes turn the loveliest child into a demon; full of playful humor at times, at others silent and abstracted.

Of only one thing did he seem to have any fear. No inducement was strong enough, during these two

years, to lead him beyond the gates of Elmswoods grounds. Time and again, with the sudden flash of purpose which has been spoken of, did he take hat and stick after breakfast, and, with a cheery "good-by," set off briskly as if to go down to the mills, to the daily round of business. Arrived at the gates, however, he would stop, gaze about in a dazed fashion, turn back again, and be lost in a maze of silent, never-uttered thoughts. At first, on these and others of his rambles, they followed him, fearing. But repeated security relaxes vigilance, and for a long time Ben went and came as he listed.

CHAPTER V.

SUBTILTIES.

IT was not until Ben had passed two years in a state sufficiently indicated in the last chapter that there entered into his life the elements of romance, — nay, of stern fact, which have made this tale of ours possible. Of a sudden Ben was plunged into a very whirlpool of events. As in a drama, characters ranged themselves around him for good and ill. There was a stirring of the elements. Nature and Ben's fellow-men began to move; and a fierce battle was waged, of which Ben — poor, half-conscious creature that he was! — was the centre. The attack was a mighty one, a subtle one: the defence silent, determined, holy.

Now let us remark, by way of introducing what is to come, that the brain of man never remains absolutely stationary. It thinks, it grows in scope, even when sleep is holding the body in silence. Under all circumstances save one — that is, death — there is motion in the brain, — development of some sort. And, if the Church is right, even in this excepted case the soul — that living mystery which only employs the brain here as it employs the tongue, the stomach, the eye, and all our members — still keeps up some sim-

ilar process of action. Even in that long sleep which we are told by some endures between the setting of this life's sun and the rising of the one which is to usher in the glorious day of eternity, there is still mental action, a vivification of sleep with dreams of bliss, or a horror of thick darkness made more awful by visions and forebodings born of a guilty conscience.

Always the mind of man is a panorama of wonders. All discussion of it is more or less superficial. It may be viewed from a multitude of points, and always it presents itself in a new aspect. From our present point of view, we look out upon a strange procession. In the line are minds strong and minds weak; minds that grasp wide ranges of thought, and grasp them clearly, others which seize only to lose hold of the idea or the purpose conceived; minds that sweep the whole horizon of human deeds, others which must be content to concentrate upon some one little duty or purpose.

And in that procession are some whom we denominate *idiotic*, *melancholy*, *mad*, *insane*. But even these are in motion: even the idiotic are thinking. According to their thoughts, at least their limbs move, their eyes roll, their tongues speak. So, in intercourse with any of these, we must always be prepared for — at least, not be taken by surprise at — any sudden, subtle change.

It would be something grand — a great step in science — to find out the causes of all such changes. But, alas! science has not progressed so far, as yet.

No one, then, can explain why, on an unhappy day

in September, early in the third year of Ben's lunacy, he should suddenly overcome or lose his fear of passing the gates of Elmswoods. Lose it he did, however, and with momentous consequences to himself and others.

At luncheon that day, when the three ladies at Elmswoods came together, the question was asked by all, simultaneously, "Where is Ben?"

The inquiry was quickly extended to servants, gardeners, stable-men, and even the more distant farmers on the place; but Ben was not to be found.

Betty Hartley had been walking with him at eleven o'clock, and at that hour was summoned to the house to see Thomas Macrae, who had come, as he often did, to make a familiar, welcome morning call. Familiar, because Macrae was on a very good footing at Elmswoods; welcome, because of his uniform kindness to the one object of solicitude. Betty had left Ben with the gardeners: he had strolled away from them towards the house, a quarter of an hour after, and there intelligible facts ceased. All that followed was a jargon of theory, and this culminated in alarm. Word was sent to Mr. Hollins, who was down at the mills. Then the news went abroad, "Ben Hollins is lost!" "Poor Ben has wandered off!"

Twenty men were sent from the offices and looms to scour the town and the surrounding country. Every train that had passed Millington since noon was telegraphed: station-masters within fifty miles were asked to keep a lookout for the wanderer. The open fields, the woods, the roads, the river-banks, where was many

a nook in which Ben might have sat unseen within a few feet of passers-by, all were searched. The afternoon hours passed; and not a sign or sound of Ben's return came with them, with one exception.

A boy came to the office at six with a well-known cuff-button, an onyx with Ben's initials cut in its face. With the logic which generally prevails among men, it seemed to be taken for granted that finding Ben's cuff-button was the same as finding Ben himself; and the men were actually called in by the ringing of the mill-bell, and the search languished, — languished for a whole hour, while Thomas Harper, superintendent of a department at the mills, went with the boy to Bridge Hill, simply to look at a stick of timber upon which the cuff-button had been found.

Bridge Hill was an abrupt rise of ground directly west of Millington, upon one side of which lay the river, sixty feet below; on the other side, a sloping road ran down to Millington, while other roads led off to the north and west over a country which lay level with the top of the hill, Elmswoods crowning the top of another hill two miles to the north-east. Bridge Hill was partially covered with timbers and irons, preparations having been made to throw a structure across the stream to the low land on the opposite bank. Standing upon its summit, you could look over an extended landscape, the river flowing eastwardly in quiet fulness for two miles or more, and finally disappearing as it rounded the base of a bluff, whence it kept its course south-eastwardly until it reached the great Ontario; in the valley below and on your left, Millington; north-

ward and westward, a rich expanse of farming-lands.

Along the river-front, in the town, the eye lights first upon several rows of cottages, some bright and tidy in new paint and with well-kept premises, others dingy and dull, probably like their occupants. Then come the mills, and the docks with a few schooners lazily rocking in the stream. Two squares away, Barony Street, the main business street, stretches its devious way along, with here and there an odd twist in it. One square more, and amid dwellings and trees three church-spires lift themselves into the air, while the square stone tower of St. Peter's seems to stand out as the presiding, harmonizing, patriarchal *princeps* of the place.

To Bridge Hill, Harper and two or three mill-men followed the rather garrulous and imaginative boy. Anent the cuff-button, Matthew Bryan finally asked, "Were it wet, Will?"

"Yes: it were a-layin' in this hole, in a puddle."

"Then," said Matthew, "'tain't no use a-stayin' here. He put that there button into the hole afore four o'clock, when it begun to rain; an' my opinion is, some one below has took him in for shelter. They be queer folk, some on 'em, down there. They mought take him in an' leave him stay all night, an' never signify."

To the cottages the party went, and lost another hour, — an hour in which some of the principal characters in the coming drama were dressing and otherwise preparing for a second act.

The hour passed, and Harper returned to the mill-offices, baffled and disconcerted. Here he found an anxious consultation going on between Mr. Hollins and some of his personal friends.

"News, Harper?" asked the feverish father.

"None, sir," replied Harper; "and I don't know what to make of it."

Harper walked up and down the room for a minute or two, and said, "I'm almost ashamed to mention it, Mr. Hollins; but Mr. Benjamin had some trouble once with that old woman who hangs around here with bag and hook. She is always to be seen hereabouts in the afternoon, but no one has laid eyes on her to-day. I'm going to find her."

It was certainly a slender thread upon which to hang hopes which were growing so leaden as Ephraim Hollins's. But what will we not build upon, in an exigency? So Mr. Hollins said, "Go, Harper, and probe that matter to the bottom." And the words were hardly out of his mouth before he dropped Harper's suspicion as unworthy of another thought.

Harper and his companions made but a three-minute walk of it to a hut which had been originally used as a shelter for the laborers and a lock-up for their tools, when the mills were built, and which Carney Dugan, the old woman of bag and hook, had converted with her own hands, and by the application of bits of old mortar and bricks and handfuls of mud into a half-savage semblance of home.

Knocking at the rickety collection of boards which served for a door, Harper was greeted with the shrill,

quavering cry, "Hev ye come? I knowed ye would. Push yerself in, Thomas."

Harper "pushed himself in;" and Carney, looking at him in the dim light of a greasy candle, took her elbows from her knees, lifted herself up in a startled way, and exclaimed, "Oh, murther! what is dhis?"

Harper was alert to every movement and every word. Without giving the woman a moment to collect herself, he asked, "What did you expect, Carney? Were you expecting to see me?"

"Sure, I was not, Misther Hairper."

"Didn't you say, 'Come in, Thomas'?"

"An' isn't yure name Thomas? an' didn't I see you t'rough dhim holes?"

A little frame-work of suspicion which had hardly taken shape in Harper's mind fell to pieces at this; but he rallied, and threw another shot at Carney.

"Carney, have you seen Mr. Benjamin?"

"Will, an' shposin' I hev, — what dhin?"

"If you have, Carney, you ought to tell us. Come, old woman, be good now, and tell us all about it."

Was Harper conning over the tales he had read of dark deeds of revenge, which such creatures as this woman had been known to commit? Was he thinking that he stood upon the verge of a discovery which would make Millington tremble with horror? He never could be brought to acknowledge it, but he was under the influence of just such thoughts; and he determined to be crafty, and to drag the secret out of this defenceless and solitary cld woman, and — met his match.

"Don't be in sich haste, Misther Hairper," said

Carney. "It's not for dhe likes o' you to say 'ole woman' to me, whin ye're axin' favors."

"No offence, Carney."

"Offince or no offince, Misther Hairper, carry civil wurruds in yer mouth whin ye're visitin' dhe ladies, an' don't be so familiar wid me Christen name, aither."

"Well, then, Mrs. Dugan" —

"Dhat's dhe crame o' politeness."

"Come, Mrs. Dugan, tell us where you saw Mr. Benjamin: that's a good girl."

"How polite ye're growin', Misther Hairper! I seen him on dhe Bridge Hill."

"When?"

"Oh-h-h-h, — sich a power of axin' questions! They should make a cinsus-taker uv ye, or an ixciseman: ye're as glib as e'er a lawyer in Dublin. It's first, 'Did ye see Misther Benjamin?' an' dhin it's '*Where* did ye see him?' an' now it's '*Whin* did ye see him?' Maybe ye'd like to know *why* I seen him, and *how* I seen him. So I tells ye, wanc't for all, Misther Hairper, I seen him on dhe Bridge Hill, beyant, at t'ree o'clock, an' I was on me ways to Widdy Cormick's, she that aftherwards married my Con Cormick, an' me a-takin' up wid Barney Dugan, an' dhey drugged me, dhey did, an' dhe praste he niver knowed it, an' now dhey're all gone dhe ways uv dhis wicked wurruld, — ohoo! ohoo! — yis-sir, an' I was on me ways, I was, to Widdy Cormick's, to hilp her count her pinnies, — she couldn't rise 'em higher nor twilve makes a shillin', an'" —

"Never mind that now, Carney," broke in Harper;

"but tell us about Mr. Benjamin. What was he doing?"

"A sittin' dhere, to be sure, on wan o' dhim shticks. An' what else would he be doin', wid dhe sinses all druv out uv his poor head — dhe poor craythur?"

"Did you not have trouble with Mr. Benjamin once?" asked Harper. As foolish a question this as Harper could possibly have asked. Nevertheless, it brought matters to a focus. Carney Durgan did know much more about Ben than she had yet revealed, and more than she meant to reveal, more than the proverbial wild horse could have dragged out of her just then. But she scented danger in Harper's question, and proceeded to fortify herself. So she blurted out, with perfect ease and naturalness, —

"Upon me hopes of glory, Misther Hairper, I seen him twice't — an' I was coming to it, but ye stopped me wid yer quistions. Wanc't on dhe Bridge Hill, at t'ree o'clock; an' afther, down be Thompson's, at half-past sivin, — only half an hour ago," said Carney, throwing into her last phrase an emphasis which she intended to produce an effect.

"Only half an hour ago!" repeated Harper, instantly making a movement towards the door; while a gleam of cunning triumph barely touched the woman's face, darting then into the darker corners of her soul to revel there.

They took their departure, Harper and his followers; and, not a hundred yards away, the figure of a man crouched unseen in the black shadows while they passed.

As Carney closed her battered, creaking door, she flung her hands wildly over her head, and presently sat down by her empty fireplace, and rocked herself to and fro, wailing and muttering by turns. She rose at last, and paced the shaking floor, exclaiming, "Oh, will it niver lave me! Is dhe blood of murdhered men to be always flowin' by me, an' me niver guilty uv wan single dhrop? O Mother uv Hiven, it's haird to be dhe victim uv other men's sins. O Mary, an' Pether, an' James, an' John, purtict me wid yer wings uv glory! O Barney, Barney, 'twas you did the foul deed, an' me dhat suffered all dhese years by it! An' now, maybe, innocent blood'll flow again, an' I'm in it. Oh, let me lave dhis murdherin' country, an' go over dhe say to me own land and me own payple!"

Such powers of mind and body as are brought into full and passionate play, on such an occasion, are soon exhausted, particularly in the aged and volatile. Suggestion, too, is a powerful lever in the changes that come to men's thoughts; and the mention of her wish to go over the sea led this woman to cease her wailings at once. Going to a corner of her cabin, candle in hand, she thrust her fingers into a hole in the flooring, and drew out two old pocket-books, whose contents she proceeded to pour into her lap.

CHAPTER VI.

THOMAS MACRAE.

FOR the completeness of the story, it is now requisite that the history of Thomas Macrae should be unfolded more at length. Place upon the easel the portrait of a tall, well-made man of five and twenty, dark almost to swarthiness, of fine figure, with an educated air, in scrupulously careful but not dandified toilet, quite the *homme des affaires*, — and you have a tolerable eye-likeness of Thomas Macrae. The mind-likeness, that mental image which is, like the photographic busts taken at Paris, made up of many pictures taken at all angles, you will have to build up from the pages which follow. As you looked at Macrae for the first time, he would make so vivid an impression upon you, that you would say almost at once, "I like this man intensely," or, "I hate this fellow without thinking twice of him." Precisely his way of judging you too. If he was vivid in giving, he was equally so in receiving, personal impressions. He would look at you just once, and his mind was made up. If you attracted his good-will at first sight, you might count upon him as a friend, and a warm one, unless in after-times your course ran too strongly counter to his. If he neglected you on first acquaint-

ance, the chances were, that he would never take the trouble to fish you up out of the pool of indifference.

Macrae's father was one of those Scotch-Irishmen who are to be found in the northern counties of Ireland, especially in Londonderry; the descendants of Scotch Presbyterians, who left their homes and crossed the Channel in persecuting times. His mother was one of those *Biscayinas* whom travellers from other countries sometimes marry because of the glamour which their dark beauty casts over the stranger.

To the family-seat at Briartop in Derry, Thomas Macrae the elder brought this foreign wife. She endured a short, fierce fight with new and strange customs and manners, — of both men and nature, — and finally succumbed, and died of hemorrhage. But the Biscayan woman was kept in memory by the likeness to herself of a six-year-old son whom she left behind her, a boy whose physical being was a mixture of Northern sturdiness and Southern fire, and whose speech was a jargon of English, Gaelic, Irish, and Labortan.

At the age of ten the boy had become the terror and the pride, at once, of all that country. His restless and not over-thoughtful father awoke then to the fact that his son needed an education; and, on one of his periodical flights to the more congenial atmosphere of the South, took the lad away from Briartop, and deposited him at Mons. Dideron's school, in Geneva.

For two years the father wandered, and the son studied. The summer heat suggested a flight north-

ward then, and the two Thomases again joined old Adam Macrae at Briartop. All the way homeward the elder traveller coughed and sighed. The old home stretched out its welcoming arms to him, drew him gently to its embrace, and, without a murmur, the exhausted man closed all his earthly accounts, said "Farewell" to his son, and in one short month was gone forever.

Old Adam seemed not to know of the existence, even, of the young nephew thus left upon his hands. For four years the boy roamed the country or staid at home, at his own will, working with hands or brain as the fancy took him, familiarizing himself with every trade and occupation known to the men of that region. He was every one's admiration, and in some respects everybody's bane.

At last an exploit on Neagh — the saving of an almost drowned woman's life — made him a hero. His uncle actually heard of him, and for the first time took notice of him. He set to work to examine the lad, — "metapheesically," as he expressed it; and within a week sent for his lawyer, and informed Thomas outright that he had adopted him, and made him heir to Briartop. In the same breath he added, "Didymus," — the old man loved Scriptural names, and looked upon his nephew as fairly entitled to any appellation borne by the scriptural Thomas, — "Didymus, ye maun gae to bukes!"

"Where?" asked young Macrae.

"Onywheer ye like," was the old man's reply.

Thomas decided upon Geneva. Mons. Dideron's

was the only school he knew. To Mons. Dideron he went, therefore; and in one year and eight months he suddenly finished his studies in a violent fit of wrath at poor old Monsieur, delivered a startling valedictory from the walk in front of the "Gymnase," and went to register himself at the Hotel Anglais.

That very day he telegraphed to his uncle to address him at Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam, *et cetera*, with dates; and the day following, with two hundred francs in his pocket, set out upon his travels, as self-possessed at eighteen as most men at thirty.

The news of this proceeding was received by old Adam Macrae at first with indifference; but on second thought, and after receiving a little "metapheesical" light upon the subject, he found his nephew's conduct to be quite business-like and admirable. With new-born respect for the young man, therefore, Adam wrote him a letter full of worldly advice, with an occasional bit of spiritual as well; and, doubtless for the purpose of securing attention to his counsels, added a letter of credit for four thousand francs.

Strange to say, Thomas Macrae was not ruined by this affair: on the contrary, it was the making of him. A very unusual occurrence, certainly, and not to be taken as a model by other youths; for not all youths have Scotch fathers and Basque mothers, nor have many such uncles as Adam Macrae.

The great trouble with the lad was that he was burning to do something. He was on fire, and could not brook the slow process of learning a language verb by verb, or a science fact by fact. No school-

building was large enough to hold him; so he took the whole world for his school, and almost every man he met for his temporary schoolmaster. He had the instinct of a bee: he sucked nectar from every thing he touched, — not mere nectar of pleasure, but of knowledge. He went to Paris, and in two weeks knew that city thoroughly. Its art-treasures pleased him for a day, its shops for another; its myriad labors on behalf of the palates and stomachs of men set him to laughing outright; and lastly he took a look at the dissipations of the capital, its painted women, its costly amusements, its vile debaucheries, pronounced the whole thing *bêtise*, and flew away over the rails to Brussels. He followed up his original itinerary, receiving everywhere kind letters from his uncle, always advising him to be a gentleman. "Be a gentleman, be a gentleman," — always this, and little else. Apparently his uncle cared nothing whether he ever learned to conjugate a Latin verb or to even name the sciences.

Macrae made short work of those Northern cities. The fit seized him, and he turned southward. Across country he travelled to Nice, to Marseilles, to the Pyrenees; then westwards till he drove into Fontarabia one evening, and asked for the name of Labozique.

"Labozique, my lord?" and the inn-keeper of whom Macrae was making inquiry at once became obsequious. "The Laboziques are all nobles, my lord, grand people. The Laboziques are Euskald-'nac. Monsieur — is he a Labozique?"

No, but his mother was.

"Ah! signor, my lord, monsieur, he has the Laboziqué eye, very true."

Out upon one of the mountain-roads Macrae found next morning a whole colony of his mother's relatives, all Laboziques, all "nobles," and all driving mules, mending ploughs, cutting poles for new pruning-hooks, two of the women doing a week's washing.

Away went Macrae again to the northward, and suddenly knocked at the library-door at Briartop, and went into his uncle's arms amid a polyglottal roaring of Adam Macrae and half a dozen servants of divers dialects. Here Macrae staid for a fortnight, drank hot Scotch whiskey with his uncle, smoked a pipe, awoke one morning with a sensation as of death gripping him here and there, went down stairs, and quietly said "Good-by" to Adam, and was off again.

The whole secret of all this restlessness was that this young man simply needed something to do, something which would engross him. But what did he know of professions or occupations?

About this time he took to reading. He would pick up any thing, — a grammar, a history, a biography, a geometry, — devour it in a few days on the railway or in his room, and toss it out of window. It was a strange way to get an education, but he was getting it.

He went to Monaco, and thinking that where men and women looked so fiercely in earnest there must be something to do, sat down to *rouge et noir*. "Fa' vo' jeu, m'sieurs," cried the croupier; and, just to see what it was like, Macrae put some silver-pieces

on the table. The croupier presently raked a corresponding number of napoleons dexterously in front of him. Macrae was struck with the absurdity of the whole proceeding, arose, and left his napoleons lying there, twenty tongues calling after him, "Monsieur! monsieur!"

"Aux pauvres," he replied, and went out, ignorant that those pieces went to the poor — ruler of Monaco.

Again he went up to Geneva, possibly with half a mind to go to M. Dideron, pay for the windows he had broken, and ask M. Dideron to help him digest the great mass of knowledge he had literally been gulping down, and become a schoolboy again at twenty. But M. Dideron was dead, and M. Fideron reigned in his stead. Macrae did not know M. Fideron, and retired from the door of the "Gymnase" disappointed.

Something drove him now to the mountains. He had always hitherto clung to humanity. This time he would try Nature. He went into the forest, took up a wood-cutter's axe, and worked till his arms ached. He was dull and tired for three days: the solitude terrified him, and he flew back to the cities. *Something to do!* was the cry of his soul; something useful and practical to expend all this burning energy upon.

Until he was twenty-one this undisciplined youth travelled, keeping up his vain, unworded search. One day, in Nuremberg, he stood looking up at the Frauen Church, almost laughing at the strange architectural industry displayed in the two-storied porch, the rows of odd little windows in the gable, and the funny

belfry. Why this church should have attracted his attention that day, when he had passed and re-passed it fifty times before with hardly a look, he could not tell. But the Fates were in it. They had given Thomas Macrae time enough for school-going: they had work for him to do now.

As he looked, a voice at his side startled him. Of late he had begun to be critical in the matter of feminine beauty. He had an ideal of face and figure and voice. This voice, which only said to a half-elderly lady in black, "How beautiful!" was the very voice. He was so startled that he looked its possessor squarely in the face, and behold! it was the very face. He scanned the figure unobtrusively, and it was the very figure.

"Something to do now!" he said almost aloud He began by following the two ladies, at a respectful distance, to their lodging. It took him but a few minutes to ascertain that they were Mrs. and Miss Hartley, on their way from Italy to Liverpool, and that their luggage had already gone on, marked, "*c*/o Steward 'Princess Adelaide,' steamer."

In another hour a telegram was on its way to certain London bankers, —

"Engage passage for me by steamer 'Princess Adelaide,' this trip.

THOMAS MACRAE."

An English newspaper was easily obtained; and Macrae learned from it that he had yet nearly two weeks to spend in Europe, and, further, that "The

Princess Adelaide" was one of the steamers of the Royal Family Line, and was destined to Quebec.

The next morning the ladies had left Nuremberg, their host said, intending to make several short stops, and then post on to England. Thither went Thomas Macrae, not once thinking of any nonsensical following of these two ladies. The fires within him had suddenly been banked. His energies were solidifying for a mighty effort; his impatience was quelled. He stopped in London long enough to ascertain that his passage was secured, and went on to Briartop.

The days flew by, and in due time Macrae went down to Queenstown and boarded the steamer. In his pocket were letters to John Macrae, the third of the Macrae brothers, from Adam. Thomas knew this John Macrae to be a lawyer practising in Canada, but had never seen him. When he learned, therefore, by adroit inquiry, that Mrs. and Miss Hartley were on board, and were booked through, by Grand Trunk Railway, to Millington, Ontario, his heart stood still for a moment, then bounded back to a settled, steady beating.

"Grand!" said Macrae. "I will study law with my uncle. The Fates have arranged it all beautifully. I can read my future as well as if it were printed in a book."

Had you known Thomas Macrae during the year preceding Ben Hollins's engagement to Betty Hartley, you would have seen in him one of the most diligent of students, one of the most exemplary of young men. The blow finally came, and his great will stood

out against it. The fire in him seemed to be wholly directed now to the one purpose of achieving a manly, honorable station, like that of his uncle. Who could tell when or how that fire might again spring up into fierce burning, devouring and licking up all that was good in Thomas Macrae?

When Ben's misfortune came, Macrae drifted into a more frequent and intimate intercourse with the family at Elmswoods. It was at the solicitation of Mr. Hollins, too, who was honestly fond of him. He was kind to Ben, and spent hours in diverting him. Was not that enough to earn any father's gratitude?

But as the year went on, Macrae grew uneasy. The old passion was rising in him again. It almost maddened him, at times, to think that Betty should bind herself to a man who was probably hopelessly insane. Step by step he drifted into a fury of love, — that fury in which men mount skywards in probity and honor, or sink hellwards. But if he offered Betty Hartley a graceful courtesy, and she blushed, how was he to know that her reddening proceeded not from love, but from very fear of his love?

Then, again, he took note of her tender devotion to Ben; and, in proportion to the intensity of that tenderness, she was cold, distant, formal, commonplace with himself. At such times his honor, his pride, his self-respect, rose to a towering height; and he went out into the fields, or paced his room until his whole being was filled with a determination to be content.

It is one thing to be a man, — a manly man, —

quite another to be always fighting and laboring to try to be a man; and this was the key to Thomas Macrae's difficulty. He found it out on a certain day in September; turned the key carelessly, or desperately: the bolt shot out of its place, and pandemonium was let loose in Millington for a time.

CHAPTER VII.

TEMPTATIONS.

WE return now to the morning of Ben Hollins's disappearance from Elmswoods. It will be remembered that Macrae had spent an hour at the house, in Betty Hartley's company. Poor Betty! she needed contact with the brightness and cheerfulness of the unafflicted. They all thought at Elmswoods that Thomas Macrae's visits were a blessing.

But Macrae, on his part, left the house that morning in great agitation. He had come to the verge of casting his burning love at Betty's feet, and challenging her; but he was afraid. He locked up his great trouble again in his breast, therefore, and went out into the open air for relief. On his way down the avenue he met Ben, and they walked together as far as the gates. The sight of Ben just at that moment filled him with loathing. He was barely civil to the poor fellow for once, and left him standing in the avenue with hardly so much as a word of farewell.

And now Macrae was in no mood for books and law-papers. He would walk, run, traverse the woods, any thing to get rid of this heart-beating, and the pressure of his rapid blood upon the brain. Not by the direct road to Millington, therefore, but across

country he went, towards the river. He never looked behind once: if he had, he would have seen a new and strange sight.

On and on he walked, gloomy, hopeless, building up anon some new castle of desire, arranging innocent-looking snares wherewith to trap a certain beautiful bird. At length he turned off towards Bridge Hill. Walking rapidly, and wholly occupied with what was passing in his own mind, he was unaware that Ben had followed him, until he stopped to seat himself for a rest on some of the timbers that lay upon the hill. To his amazement, Ben was within forty paces of him.

"What have you followed me for, Ben?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, folly! — ha, ha! — great folly!"

A flush came over Thomas Macrae. "What a shame!" he thought, "that a girl like Betty Hartley should have to bear this sort of thing all her life!" The river plashed against the lofty wall of rock below; and the hissing wash of each succeeding wavelet seemed to bring suggestions more and more distinctly to his half-horrified, half-willing ear. He hated to look that way, lest he should see shapes of unholy aspect. He shuddered when there came to his ear, as distinctly as if Ben himself had uttered them, the words, "Come on, Thomas Macrae! Grand times down here. Marry the girl you love; do just as you please; defy the silly laws of heaven and earth. Oh, what a merry life we devils lead!"

Macrae was startled, and, leaping up, seized Ben's arm, and almost dragged him into the road and hurried with him towards Elmswoods; and as he went,

faster and faster, there came to him on every breeze and from the rustle of every leaf a demon voice, a demoniac suggestion.

What if Ben should wander alone to Bridge Hill, and fall over into the river below?

What if he should be standing near the edge of that precipice: how much of a push, how much fury, would it require to send him over?

Was Thomas Macrae prepared to yield to such suggestions? Not at all. He was too wise a man for that, held himself still too close in hand; and, with every step which lengthened the distance between him and the scene of temptation, Macrae was becoming stronger and calmer, — so calm finally that he dared to look at Ben. And what a sight presented itself to him!

This rapid walking was a new experience to Ben. He was in a glow of something like excitement. Half his coat was stripped off and hung dangling; his waistcoat was open, necktie fluttering, sleeves hanging loose.

"Ben, what have you been doing to yourself?" Macrae asked. "Where is your hat? And your cuff-buttons — what have you done with them?"

"Ha, ha!" answered Ben. "I've done for them this time sure enough."

"Did you take them out on the hill?"

"Well, I couldn't rightly say as to that," answered Ben; and in a helpless way he half-turned towards the hill.

There was a suggestion in the motion, and a per-

fectly innocent one. Macrae followed it, and they turned back to re-traverse the mile they had just covered. Arrived at the place, Macrae speedily recovered one of the buttons, but the other was not to be found.

The time consumed was long enough for a new attack from without, and Macrae's blood began to boil again. The loudness of the voices from below was gone: they came in whispers this time.

"Come, Macrae, don't be a coward. Marry the girl you love, and come down here and dwell with us. Oh, what a merry set we are! And, Macrae, send *him* down first!"

Macrae laughed at this now, — scorned it; tossed stones over the bank, as if to say, "There! feed on those! Stones are good enough food for such murderous devils as you."

Nevertheless, awful thoughts were passing in Macrae's soul; and as one after another came into being, was examined, rejected, and passed away, still others trooped in. Rain-drops began to patter upon the timbers; and Macrae arose, saying, "Come, Ben: it is going to rain. We must go home."

As he stood he gave that sweeping look towards the road which is almost always our first operation when setting out upon a walk. His blood almost went cold as he encountered the gaze of an old woman standing motionless on the crown of the hill. It was Carney Dugan. She had been standing there full fifteen minutes, Macrae all unconscious of it. She lifted her finger, and shook it at him. He was maddened by this, — disgusted, terrified, — and then provoked with

himself for attaching any importance to the impertinences of such a forlorn creature.

Faster and faster came the rain. A two-mile walk was not quite as desirable as shelter. At the foot of the hill, five minutes away, there were houses; better yet, here was an old roadside shop, unused. The windows were long ago battered out, but it was good enough for an hour's waiting. Harder and harder the September flood poured down from the water-laden sky. The hour passed into two; and, finally, at four minutes before six, the sun went down, the twilight spread abroad and deepened into darker and darker shades.

Macrae saw Harper and his followers go up the hill. Had he known that they were in search of Ben, he might still have saved himself by simply crying out, "Here is Ben! He is all right and safe!" But he did not know, and did not think. He was on fire with phosphoric thought. He had resolved, — that is to say, half-resolved, — in his enforced silence, to make a bold push for success. A plan had come into his mind, — one so bloodless, so *comparatively* innocent, that he began to wonder how he could have let a whole year glide by without trying it.

In the deepening darkness, and in a lengthy lull in the storm, Macrae and Ben left the old shop. "Come on, Ben," was enough to secure docile following, and Macrae successfully threaded lanes and streets without exposure; for the search after Ben was at this time temporarily suspended, and the town lay for that hour in its accustomed early-evening quiet. With a bound-

ing heart, Macrae turned the key in his own door, clinching his hands, as if to hold firmly the triumph he had achieved.

"Ben, you are half-wet," said Macrae.

"Ha! a little moist, I should say."

"I must give you something dry. Here, let's put this on, Ben, — and this, — and this."

The clothing which Ben was speedily covered with made quite a different-looking man of him. Moreover, not one piece of it had ever been seen on the streets of Millington. There was a coat from Barton's, Ludgate Hill; a waistcoat from Palisser's, Grand Rue, Paris. Ben's own apparel was all dark: these articles were of lighter shades.

"Come, Ben!" Oh that fatal docility of obedience! "Come, Ben!"

Together they went out into the night. We shall find them again, but most quickly by following Carney Dugan.

Carney had gone on up the Bridge Hill road, westwards, to the widow Cormick's, to help her count her pennies. As she went she muttered, "The lad is spirited enough; an' I niver knowed a Macrae dishonest in all me life. But what a look was dhat in his face! an' what was he thinking of, wid his head down in his han's, an' he a-lookin' up at Misther Ben, wid his teeth set an' his eyes on fire? O Barney Dugan! wasn't it dhat same look I seen in yure face wanc't, the night Con Cormick was killed? Whin murdher's in dhe wish, it's dhe same like in dhe face. Is it me fate to be privy to sich things all me days? O Bar-

ney, an' yer ghost can come down an' warn him away, do it! Maybe it's dhe dade o' charity as'll cover yer own multitude uv sins."

Carney's mind was not upon her work as she slowly looked over the pennies, and half-dimes, and occasional English sixpences, which her sister-widow spread out before her. She finished her counting as speedily as possible, therefore, and set out to return to Millington, in greater haste than she had ever travelled that road before. Had it been Ben Hollins only that was concerned in the matter which was now weighing so heavily upon Carney's mind, it is doubtful whether she would have thought twice of it; but she had reasons for an intense interest in Macrae. She saw, or thought she saw, danger in the occurrence of the afternoon; and a resolve to avert it took possession of her.

She had seen Macrae and Ben go down the hill, so she made her way to the town. The tidings of Ben's disappearance greeted her at every turn; but not a word did she say of meeting him, for fear of compromising Macrae. She made an excuse for going into the mill-offices; she looked in at many of the shops; she passed Macrae's lodging, and could see no sign of life there.

At last came the rumor that Ben had been found, and Carney saw the mill-men going home in that satisfied, unconcerned way which confirms us in the belief that anxiety has ceased. She went to her cabin, therefore, satisfied that all had come right again.

But bitter recollections had come into her mind, and Carney sat and wailed until darkness enveloped

her. As the clock in St. Peter's tower struck seven, Carney rose, and saying aloud, "Betune dhis an' dhe widdy, I've lost me day intirely, an' niver a stick in dhe house," took up her basket, and set off down the river-bank, below the mills, where firewood could be had for the taking. She threw over her head a small three-cornered shawl, so ragged and soiled as to have little resemblance to the gay affair it was when it first left the loom, and was presently threading her way among the lofty piles of tanbark and scattered heaps of refuse which constituted the holdings of what were known as Thompson's yards.

Let me explain briefly that the firm of Thompson Brothers used these yards for storage of schooner-loads of bark which was brought from the upper country, and here shipped by rail to the tanneries, forty miles away. A special track had been laid into these yards from the main line of the railway; and every evening one or more cars were loaded here, and taken off about eight o'clock by an eastward-bound goods-train.

As Carney reached this track her keen eyes detected two figures moving slowly near one of the loaded cars, a matter of forty feet distant. It was impossible to recognize either of them in the darkness, but hearing supplied Carney with startling information. As she stood watching, the words came down to her, "Come, Ben, climb up here!"

Carney saw one of the figures mount the car, and crouch into a narrow space by the side of a stake. The other person, leaving him then, turned away, and

walked slowly towards Carney. Crossing the track, he stumbled, and almost fell into Carney's arms. He was flushed with success, this stumbler, — by name Thomas Macrae, — and had lost his watchfulness; but, in spite of the surprise which overtook him, he managed to say, almost coolly, "This is the second time I have met you to-day."

"Yis, sir," replied Carney, "jist that; an' maybe it wud ha' been betther for all uv us if I had made it wanc't, an' wanc't only, as I was minded out on dhe Bridge Hill."

"What are you talking about?"

"What are you doin' wid Misther Binjamin?"

"Sending him up on Thompson's car to the station, of course. Didn't you know he was lost? He wandered away from me this afternoon, and we have been looking all over the town for him."

Macrae was for moving on, but Carney detained him.

"Thomas Macrae," said she solemnly, "beware uv dhe evil wan!"

"Stop your infernal tongue, you meddling beggar!" was his reply.

"Softly, gintly, Misther Macrae," said Carney; "av ye want anny thing uv me, ye must be civil."

"Who wants any thing of you, woman?" asked Macrae; then, with a sneering laugh, "No one wants your help in this matter, I am sure; for Mr. Benjamin will soon be at the station, and I shall take him home."

"An' shposin' you shouldn't, Misther Macrae, what

dhin? Carney Dugan's old, but not blind. Now listen me, Misther Thomas. Dhe Macraes o' Briartop was used to spake softly to dhe likes o' me, an' not knock us down wid haird wurruds. I knowed 'em long before iver you seen dhe light o' day. 'Twas but an hour's journey from dhe Scotch fairms in lower Derry to Arboe, in county Tyrone, where me an' my Barney lived. Oh! could ye but see Barney Dugan the day, Misther Thomas, perhaps ye'd need no help uv mine! Manny's dhe day's fishin' an' sailin' yure father had wid my Barney an' Con Cormick on Lough Neagh to Killead an' Glanevy in Antrim; an' more times dhan twinty dhey crossed dhe Shebli Gallan together. Dhe Macraes was uv gintle blood an' makin'. It's no time to be bringin' evil ways intle it."

Thomas Macrae was stricken dumb, for the moment. Here was a ragged, miserable woman claiming a sort of connection with him, professing an interest in him, and yet seemingly menacing him. Rapidly he surveyed the field which was darkly spread before him. Here was untold danger in this woman's little knowledge of his purpose and his acts. Should he retrieve every thing by the one capital stroke of giving up Ben to Carney, and asking her to take him to Mr. Hollins's office? Something whispered in his ear, "No: one turn more, and all is accomplished!"

On the rack for seven hours, Macrae was becoming blind: a great confusion was coming over him. The door to a good ending of all this trial had been opened to him several times; and each time, what he afterwards called accident, but what was really nothing

but a momentary infirmity of will, intervened, and he drifted back towards evil.

His first approach to crime, he "bungled" at it, as men say. His question, Shall I retrieve all? he answered in the affirmative. But when it came to giving Ben up to Carney Dugan, — the woman was repulsive to him, she had meddled with him, he was angry with her: he would restore Ben, but not through her. He would submit to no such degradation as that, and have her holding the whip over him ever afterwards. He would take Ben up to Elmswoods himself.

It was a great relief to Macrae to have so decided; and now advancing a step, he said with the boldness of conscious superiority, "Stand aside, Mrs. Dugan. Don't you see that they are pushing those cars up to the station? They will be there in five minutes, and I must hasten or I shall lose Mr. Benjamin."

But the woman clung persistently to him. "I goes wid you," she said firmly and quietly.

To break away from Carney, and run towards the station, was Macrae's first thought; but what dangers might not spring out of this? Perhaps it would be better to lose one minute more in parley. So he turned to Carney, saying, "I am perfectly competent to take care of Mr. Ben without any help, Mrs. Dugan;" and then with a burst of angry chagrin, revealing his inmost soul to her and exciting Carney's doubts still more, he added, "And, mind you, don't you cross my path again! If you do, it will be the worse for you."

"*You* can take care of him, can you?" asked Carney. "An' maybe it'll be dhe same kin' o' care you took uv him on dhe Bridge Hill, an' as you've been carin' for him iver since! Thomas Macrae, go to dhe rail-house as fast as iver yer legs can carry you; an' I goes wid you on mine. Do ye hear to dhat?"

There was no help for it. Time was becoming precious. The goods-train was already rattling down from the west; and Macrae was now as anxious to prevent Ben from being carried away as he had been, in his temporary passion, to get rid of him. He strode on, therefore, as much in advance of his unwelcome companion as possible; but it required more than five minutes to reach the station.

And what was the use of their going to that spot at all? The train made no stop there, but drove past almost at full speed. It was not there, but an eighth of a mile below, that the cars from Thompson's were taken up; and Macrae and Carney either did not know this, or in their excitement forgot it. They stood, therefore, bewildered, doubting; and, as they waited, the rattle of the train ceased for a moment, there was a pushing and pulling of cars in the distance, a few shoutings of men and blowings of the whistle, a "Let go!" sounded shrilly upon the air, and the train was off again, its manifold sounds growing fainter and fainter, until Carney and Macrae were left alone in the stillness of the undisturbed night. Macrae was shaking, as a mill-wheel shakes when its round of steady duty is brought to a stop by an overwhelming flood, the great rush of waters enveloping it and

refusing to let it turn. His face was literally livid, its dark lines growing darker, and its lighter ones like new-moonlight — ghastly.

"Fine worruk you've made of it dhis night, Thomas Macrae!" said Carney; "fine worruk for dhe people at Elmswoods, an' for yersilf, an' for me too! who knows?"

To have faced all the risks in this affair alone would have been comparatively easy for Macrae; but the instant he comprehended that now he must share every thing with this miserable woman he grew sick at soul. The only relief possible came in hideous shape.

"Misther Thomas!" said Carney, "now hear to me again. Before dhis night is over dhere may be innocent blood on yure han's; but Carney Dugan'll niver forget dhat it was a Macrae washed blood aff her own han's wanc't, whin Con Cormick was a-lyin' in dhe upper field at Briartop wid his head crushed be my Barney! 'Twas Con Cormick I loved, an' dhey drugged me to marry Barney Dugan; an' whin Barney Dugan lay dhat night snatchin' dhe bit sleep till he'd run over till Belfast in dhe early morning to set sail to Loverpool, an' me a-standin' over him wid dhe axe in me han's, to do vengeance on him, in comes yure father, Misther Thomas, an' says, 'Get him off, Carney; get him off. They've found Con's body an' Barney's cudgel.'—'Oh!' says I, 'dhe Holy Vargin an' all dhe saints be praised!' Misther Macrae niver seen it, but he saved me from murther dhat night; an' I'd do it for you, Misther Thomas, av I could."

"Don't make such a racket, Mrs. Dugan! pray don't!" said Macrae almost piteously. "What's to be done? I — I thought we should have found Ben here."

"Toots wid yer findin' Ben! What did ye put him on dhat cair for, but not to fin' him? Misther Thomas! — wan quistion! — is it for love uv the Hairtley lass ye done this?"

Of what use was it for Macrae to set himself against this woman? Maddened, aghast at the first consequences of his evil deed, he lost all control of himself. He turned away from Carney, and fled.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TEMPTED TURNED TEMPTER.

WHEN Harper left Carney Dugan's hovel, spurred to eager action by the information that Ben had been at Thompson's, he went thither as one who felt sure that he was near the object of his pursuit. Lanterns were procured, and the yards thoroughly searched. But not a sign of Ben was to be found, save a handkerchief marked "B. H."

Said Matthew Bryan, "Mr. Harper, this be almost dead certain. Here be the very spot where they loaded Thompson's car. He be gone on that car."

The same conclusion had already been reached by Harper; and the party hastily returned to the offices, where Harper unfolded a project whose practicability impressed itself at once upon Mr. Hollins and his friendly advisers.

To put it in Harper's own words, his proposal was as follows: —

"If Mr. Benjamin has gone off on the goods-train, it is easy enough to find him. That train is a slow one, and makes many stops. An engine always comes to Millington station about nine o'clock, and waits here until midnight to help the westward goods-train up the Winbrook grade. I know Sandys, the engin-

eer; and, if you gentlemen will take the responsibility, we can overhaul the train in an hour, and return in advance of the westward train. We must be quick about it. It is nearly nine now."

They were quick about it, indeed, as in such an exigency they had need to be. A few words of explanation enlisted Sandys's interest. He asked a backing from Mr. Hollins if the irregularity of "running his engine wild" should be inquired into at headquarters; and, being assured of it, made a rapid calculation as to how far away the goods-train might be, how long it would "take her" to shift cars at Wormley and Pardon, and how much time "she" would lose at Tarnton switch waiting for the express.

The stoker "fired up," and away they went, Harper having two of the mill-men with him. Cautiously they proceeded at first, until all the Millington switches and sidings were passed; then Sandys pulled upon the throttle, and the engine breathed harder and faster.

The cab shook and swayed. The track-joints gave out a sound like the rattle of a snare-drum. Five anxious faces peered out of the little cab-windows from time to time, looking among the dense shadows and out into the deeper blackness beyond, as if Ben might happen to be wandering there.

"Five miles in five minutes," said the engine-driver. "Now we're coming to the eight-mile straight. When I lift my hand, begin to count, and when I sing out stop."

Sandys's hand went up suddenly, and Harper

watched the second-hand of his timepiece as it leaped along — oh, how slowly! Now for a race against time, nay, against faults in engineering, against carelessness and want of skill in the making of iron rails and spikes and in the shaping and fastening of ties, against a thousand unforeseen accidents of quicksand, heat, cold, storm and fire, or mistakes by sleepy or overworked telegraphers, of the devilishness of creatures in human form who scruple not to plunge a whole train into wreck and death, that they may pillage. On and on the "Stamford" flew. Islay, Pangborn, Wales, were passed. A mile beyond, Sandys called out, "Stop!" The eight miles were finished.

"Six minutes and fourteen seconds," said Harper. The seconds did not seem so slow then.

"And, Sandys," added Harper, "we must be getting somewhere near that train."

The driver's only reply was, "What's that bright light?"

And in another minute he answered his own question and the inquiring looks of the others.

"That's a fire, and not a forest-fire, nor yet a farmer's house. That's oil. The road curves below here a little, and shoots off in that direction. That goods-train had eleven cars of oil from Petrolia. Something has happened down there. Stoke her, Billy!"

In a minute or two more the curve was rounded, and the hearts of these five men leaped as they saw a burning train a mile ahead.

"Now, Billy, look sharp," said Sandys, as he pre-

pared to bring the engine to a stop as close to the train as possible.

"What's the matter, Parker?" he asked of the conductor of the goods-train, who was looking ruefully on, in an interval of hard labor at pushing the rear cars up the track out of reach of the blazing oil. There was little or nothing to tell, not even a theory.

Harper and the two mill-men looked at once for Thompson's cars. Not a sign of Ben Hollins could they discover. They looked for a living Ben, they looked for a dead Ben; but there was nothing.

Only one solitary clew was obtained. A hat was picked up, smeared and bloody, one of those East Indian affairs of straw and white muslin, affected by the Canadian youth in summer. They took this back to Millington. Ben had had just such a hat, and it could not be found. So they mourned and mourned at Elmswoods, with an indescribable horror at Ben's probable fate, — a horror which even a telegram from the scene of the accident the next morning could not allay. The telegram described a body found in the ditch. "Dark hair streaked with gray; mustache; poorly clad; general appearance of tramp." This was not Ben.

The newspapers took it up, and within a week asserted that it was beyond doubt that "young Mr. Hollins of Millington" had perished; and even Harper adopted this view of the matter, returning to his regular round of work as if this episode in the affairs of the world had come to an end.

Almost at the very hour when Harper returned to Millington, Ben's case was under consideration by others, and these had no thought of giving up Ben for lost. One especially — Thomas Macrae by name — was nerving himself to the point of beginning a search for Ben just as those who most sincerely loved him gave it up.

When he fled from Carney Dugan at the station, the old woman looked at his retreating figure as long as the darkness permitted, and then set out for her miserable home, muttering as she went, "He'll be comin' again. He's wild-like now; an' if he doesn't seek me, I'll seek him."

And true enough, before many minutes there was a knock at her door. Her thoughts were dwelling upon the expected visitor; and she called out, "Come in, Thomas!" finding herself, to her surprise, face to face with Harper, not Macrae.

Again a few minutes, and the dark figure which crouched out of sight as Harper and his men left Carney's cabin arose to the stature of a man and cautiously approached.

As he opened Carney's door, he stood for a moment perplexed at the woman's attitude of despair. She sat staring at the old pocket-books and the little heap of silver coins in her lap. Seeing Macrae at last, she burst into lamentation.

"Oh-h-h! Woe an' woe, Misther Thomas! dhe swate life is goin' out uv me intirely! Me a-workin' dhe very bones out uv me fingers, an' me little store all gone! O Misther Thomas! whativer will I do now

or next? O Misther Thomas! you're a lawyer, — can you see dhe way out uv dhis?"

"What is it all about, Mrs. Dugan?" asked Macrae.

"O Misther Thomas! dhis is a life of throuble an' sorry! T'irty yares ago I kem to dhis land, in hopes of rist and pace. But dhey wuddent lave me rist wan day nor hour in it. It's a place for wild beasts an' fowels uv dhe air. An' me a-savin' an' savin', dhese manny yares back, wid buyin' an' sellin' an' beggin', an' scrapin' up dhe price of a ticket back to Arboe, — it's t'irty dollars for me passage, — an' I've dhe tin cup an' plate by me, an' tin dollars for dhe ixpadiencies, an' that makes forty; an' 'twas like rollin' up mountains, it was, to get it. An' here I was wid four poun'-notes on dhe Bank uv Monthreal in dhis book, an' dhe rist uv it in silver in dhis wan, an' here's me paper money all gone! Ohoo! ohoo!"

Macrae would have screamed almost, had not Carney's talk come to an end. He was very nearly hysterical already. His Scotch sturdiness and his Biscayan fire had rubbed against each other so long, now, that he was all but torn in pieces. But none of his quickness was gone: his thoughts came as sparks of electric light yet. Carney's lament was like the turning of a generating-plate, and his fiery brain received the scintillation almost instantly. It was difficult for him to restrain himself from pouring out at once the words that flew together on his tongue; but he made a mighty effort, and went out into the cool night-air to think, to reflect.

He had come here vaguely purposing to struggle

with Carney, to plead, to threaten, to argue, to persuade, to bribe, perhaps to do even worse; and now, was there in Carney's words an opening of escape, — something which he might turn to account?

He went in again, half-calmed; shaking, it is true, as if in an ague, but hopeful. With an inward gasp, he grasped Carney's arm, and said, "Mrs. Dugan, do you really wish to go to Ireland?"

"Wish, is it? Wouldn't I begin dhe journey afut, dhis very night, av it wasn't for dhe murdherin' say dhat lies betuxt?"

"Stop your noise, then, and let us talk it over. Perhaps I can comfort you."

"An' it wouldn't be dhe first time I was comforted be a Macrae, aither. Sure I said it was dhe Macrae blood was in you, Misther Thomas."

"Never mind the blood. Now, see here: if you want to go to Ireland, you shall go. Do you hear?"

"An' how am I goin'? on a broomshtick?"

"Nonsense! In a steamer of course."

"O Misther Thomas" —

"Hold on, now; wait till I say all I have to say. Mrs. Dugan, you want something, and I want something. Will you go to Ireland, and [he whispered in her ear now] take —— with you?"

The name of Ben Hollins was not even whispered.

Carney arose in unfeigned alarm. The eager eye was fastened upon hers, however; and at the end of that trying time, in which these two gazed at each other, the power of the man and the selfish cupidity of the woman conquered. Suppose she said No, Car-

ney reasoned, what fate still awaited Ben? and suppose she consented, and went, could she not restore Ben at some future time? And what of herself also? This began to trouble her. She had been assuming a mighty deal of authority over Macrae; but now, of a sudden, the tables were turned, and this fierce young man was making her afraid.

They talked till midnight. They schemed, and plotted, and planned. They discussed the chances of Ben's escape from the train, of his being discovered by the train-hands and ordered off. And the conclusion was, that Macrae determined that it would be an easy matter to trace Ben and find him. If it became necessary, he knew professionally just the man to employ for that business. But he knew another man whom he would intrust with it first, and that man was —himself.

"To-morrow morning, then, I will go in search of him, Mrs. Dugan. *Peste!* I wish you had said you wished to go to Ireland when we were down at Thompson's."

"And so does I, Misther Thomas."

And so do we all. For, in all probability, these two would then have entrapped each other in far less time than it required under the new arrangement.

Macrae had now a purpose once more, and almost felt as if he were about to do something virtuous. The very first thing he did in the morning was to go to Elmswoods boldly enough. He fairly rushed up to Mr. Hollins, and was voluble with his regrets at having been "*absent*" yesterday during the alarm. He had

heard all about the railway-accident, and felt that Ben must be alive and within reach. He was going in person to the spot where the accident occurred, and should push his inquiries into every hamlet and farm-house. And he fairly laughed as he bade them be of good cheer.

But they mourned and wept at Elmswoods over the hat which they had carefully laid away. And Thomas Macrae, knowing that this was not the hat which Ben wore, said not a word to that effect. He let them go on mourning, and even wrote down in his note-book, "Do not forget B.'s h."

Oh, how grateful they were at Elmswoods! Mrs. Hollins was filled with confidence in this ardent young man.

"And you may be sure, Mr. Hollins, that I shall not leave a stone unturned," said Macrae, as he went down the steps.

And he did not.

CHAPTER IX.

SI KIMBER'S PLACE.

IN this chapter we shall allow Ben Hollins to speak for himself; that is to say, we shall use a portion of his manuscript *verbatim*. Before writing the quotation-marks, however, let it be briefly explained that we are on the threshold of one of the great mysteries of the most mysterious of sicknesses.

Ben's manuscript is made up of his recollections in after-days of impressions made upon his mind during the period of his aberration. Now, it is not every impression thus made which is retained and held in the memory. But shall this cast discredit upon what is professedly remembered and told? If so, then the narrations of the sane must be discarded also. For do we not all forget much more than we remember?

The singular feature of this matter is, that an insane man forgets from day to day, from moment to moment almost, what he is saying and doing; and yet years afterward, when restored to health and soundness, a panorama of the facts, the feelings, and the fancies even, of his dark days will come vividly before him.

Nevertheless Ben Hollins's paper would not be quoted here, were it not for the fact that so many, even minute, details and particulars written therein

have been corroborated by testimony of others that the whole narrative is stamped with truthfulness. There are blanks in the story, indeed, which must be filled from information obtained elsewhere, the record of hours when tired human nature became oblivious to what was passing.

FROM "NARRATIVE BY B. HOLLINS."

"My first recollection of the day on which I left Elmswoods," writes Ben, "dates from the hour when Macrae and I sat together on the timbers at Bridge Hill. I remember placing one of my cuff-buttons in a mortise-hole in one of the timbers. When Macrae and I left the hill, an old woman, whom I looked upon with great apprehension, met us, and either said or did something which excited my fears. I pointed secretly to the stick whereon I had laid the onyx button, thinking, as I clearly recollect, to appease her anger or to divert her attention. Unobserved by Macrae, as I think, and guided by my dread of the woman, I turned more than once to look at her. I saw her go to the timbers, lift up the button, and look at it carefully, then lay it back again in the same place.

"Presently we reached the old blacksmith shop, two-thirds of the way down the hill; and Macrae led me in. Oh, how often have I thought of that woman since that unhappy day! She became the one element of misery in my life. She lifted her warning finger at me by day; she intruded upon my dreams at night, and threatened me.

"Pleased as a child with the fresh suit of clothes which Macrae gave me at his rooms, I went out with him, with a feeling that now I was to do real business in the world. No question arose in my mind as to Macrae's intentions. I followed him with eagerness, — I almost outwalked him. I mounted the car at his bidding, still under the impression that it was all for business, that I was going somewhere to meet some one on urgent affairs.

"The moving of the train gave me the keenest of pleasures. The pushing and pulling of the locomotive, the bumping of the cars, the ringing of the bell, the shrieking of the whistle, — all kept me alert. The train was only a goods-train, but to me it seemed to fly. Faster and faster we went. Millington lights faded away in the distance; trees and fences came in sight, and were gone again before I could count them. Then I looked upward to the now cleared sky, studded with sparkling stars, and I trembled as a great multitude of them seemed to fall around me. Again I laughed at myself for so mistaking the sparks thrown out by the locomotive when the stoker put on fresh fuel.

"After we had traversed some distance, — I cannot tell how much, — the car upon which I was began to lurch and twist, the piles of bark pressed more and more heavily upon me, and I could barely maintain my place. A broad glare of light shot suddenly out into the fields, and moved as we moved. It was only the stoker opening the furnace-door, but to me it seemed some awful sign of disaster. I no more

thought of business, or of the pleasure of travelling. Fear was my one feeling, my one thought.

"Suddenly the bark upon the car on which I was stationed gave way with a horrifying sound, and I heard a great mass of it falling upon the track. I cannot accurately describe what followed. All that I can recall is a crash, a whirl, a wrench, a plunge into the ditch. I fell into an abyss, apparently of mud and water. I came out of this almost as quickly as I went in, and remember the poignant regret with which I surveyed my ruined clothing.

"Loud voices shouting, calling, asking, replying, re-awakened my terrors. I looked up, and saw a great flame shoot skywards, and fall back again to the earth, covered with a pall of the very blackest darkness. Horrible fumes began to stifle me, tongues of flame reached out towards me, tongues that seemed to have old women's faces over and around them. They roared to me, 'Away! away!'

"I recall most clearly the agony in which I climbed up into the field and fled. How far I went I know not; but I did not stop, certainly, until those voices were no longer audible, that dreadful flame out of sight.

"Those who have never suffered as I have can hardly understand how easily and quickly, even to suddenness, the most engrossing emotions pass away from the afflicted. For instance, I was only out of sight and hearing of what had so terrified me but a short time before, when I lay down under the trees and went sound asleep.

"Very early in the morning I awoke. The stillness around me was death-like; not the quiet merely which comes from the absence of man, but that deeper, utter silence which is to be known and felt only in the woods, and only at those hours which have been fitly called 'the gloaming,' especially the hour of morning twilight, when it seems as if the very spirits of the air were sleeping, the insects, birds, and every tree and bush wrapped in slumber.

"I remember feeling uneasy. I looked in vain for familiar things. I washed my hands and face in a cool stream near by, and, spying a road at a little distance, betook myself thither, and set out upon a journey which may be called aimless, or not, according to the intensity with which those who read my story shall be able to enter into my feelings and thoughts.

"My journey, I know, was northward; for I can distinctly remember having the sun at my back all through the middle of the day. It was a very lonely road upon which I travelled. There were fields, not covered with signs of the grain-harvest, but with blackened stumps of trees; long stretches of dark, dismal-looking forest; here and there cross-roads with few or no fresh ruts in them; and, as I went on and on, the way grew more and more gloomy. Twice — perhaps oftener — I came near habitations of men. Once I saw a small village in the distance. But I had grown fearful of human beings now, and made long detours to avoid those whom I had so nearly met.

"Late in the afternoon I came to the end of the road. It stopped in a great bank of turf as abruptly

as if it had come to the very end of the world; but in the turf were marks of wagon-wheels, and I followed them up a knoll to a broad, flat space, whereon a number of logs lay scattered about. I sat down upon one of these logs, wearied out. I was not troubled in mind. I had no sense of being utterly out of the world, lost and forsaken. Indeed, if I had had such a feeling it would have disappeared very quickly; for almost immediately upon my arrival I made an acquaintance.

"A large, handsome dog came bounding down the turf, came close to me, barked once or twice, sniffed at me, wagged a comely tail, and deliberately stretched himself at full length at my feet. Now, I have always loved dogs; and I caressed this one, and felt grateful to him for his company. This put us upon a good footing with each other, and presently my canine friend put his nose between his paws, and closed his eyes.

"But I knew that he was not asleep. I had seen that same performance on the part of intelligent dogs before. He was meditating, that was all. Again and again he lifted his head, took a long look at me, — how thoroughly I recollect all this pantomime! — and went to thinking again.

"A sane man would have wondered, doubtless, how this thoroughbred animal, a very aristocrat of his species, came to be in such an outlandish corner of the world; but my thoughts were not of the questioning kind.

"At length my friend arose, retreated from me a few paces, barked, ran off a dozen yards, and turned

to look at me. I am ashamed to say it, but I did not comprehend him. If he could only have said, in human speech, 'Come, Ben!' I would have followed him doubtless; but I failed to grasp the meaning of the bark, the run, the turn, the furious tail-wagging, the eager open mouth. Three times the invitation was given me, but I silently declined as often.

"The dog now returned, and resumed his attitude of meditation. He was the better reasoner of the two, I imagine; for while I was powerless to move even, the animal invented a method of moving me. He arose and barked loudly, not in a 'bow-wow' as before, but with a 'boo-woo-woo!' Instantly three of his fellows came tearing down into the open. Round and round they circled, nose to nose, head to head, foot against foot. As a finale, the three new-comers lay down on as many sides of me, watching me with open mouth, while the Prince scampered off and disappeared."

There is a hiatus here in Ben's narrative, a lapse of memory; but the facts are known.

Prince, the prince of dogs, had undertaken a deed of charity; and his method of performing the same was much sharper and quicker than those pursued by boards of directors and general agents.

Now, at a little distance from Ben, but as yet unseen by him, was a habitation, the only one in many miles of wild country. Evidently this was no farmer's house nor laborer's cottage. Built of rough boards heavily

battened, with an unusually small number of lights for so large a building, surrounded with a heterogeneous collection of articles, — an old boat, a smartish city wagon, a half-dozen dog-kennels, frames with nets drying upon them, — decorated here and there with skins of eels and squirrels, this edifice would have been, to any stranger happening that way, an architectural problem.

The ownership, however, was clear enough; for a rough signboard nailed crookedly upon a corner of the house declared this to be

SI KIMBER'S PLACE.

To this came Prince, eager and shaking with that nervous tremor which is part of a good and charitable dog's normal condition. He made his presence known at the kitchen-door by furiously barking, whining, and scratching, — so furiously that Debby, Si Kimber's daughter, opened the door at once to ascertain the cause of all this commotion. Prince greeted her with a sharp "bow-wow," and again exhibited the canine tactics of short runs and turnings about, as if eager to secure a following. Debby was accustomed to the ways of the animal creation, and understood Prince as quickly as if he had said, "Come out here immediately: you are wanted!"

Speaking to some other person within, Debby followed the dog down the stubbly patch which served as yard, lawn, and road, all in one, and out on the knoll came upon poor, tired Ben. Here was a strange

sight, — a figure all splashed and begrimed, a tramp, an escaped convict, some one surely that belonged to the "used-up" class. But what of the face, the clean hands, which Ben had laved in many a brook that day? What of the whole air of the man, the something which cast Debby's tramp-or-convict theory to the winds?

"No tramp 'bout him," thought Debby. "Ain't drunk, either." Then, aloud, she asked Ben, "Say, you, who are you?"

"Oh, yes!" replied Ben: "what's *your* news?" And on the instant he made a motion as if to rise and walk on.

"Stop, you man!" cried Debby. "Why, you look a'most as tired as death."

"Oh, yes, to be sure! tired to death. Very hard work, I'm sure. I had better sit down, perhaps," Ben said, smiling gently.

There was something in the speech and in the smile that smote upon Debby's soul. It was the most painful sight she had ever witnessed. She stood there looking at Ben, feeling the uselessness of asking questions; and finally lifted up her voice, and sent out into the air a shrill, penetrating call.

"Mar! mar!" she cried.

"Mar" — that is to say, Mrs. Kimber — responded to her daughter's summons with alacrity. She came down the patch on a run, putting strands of hair over this ear and over that as she came, and calling out, "What's the matter, Deb?"

"Come along 'n' see, can't you?" answered the

daughter. "You never seen sich a critter in all your life, mar!"

Mrs. Kimber came close to Ben, and, probably associating any thing unusual in humanity with deafness, shouted, "What ye doin' here, mister?"

Ben recoiled, and looked troubled.

"Why, he's deef 'n' dumb, Deb!"

"No, he ain't nuther, mar. He's ben a-talkin' to me. Don't you yell at him so!"

Tugging at his coat, muttering, "Missed her, — oh, yes, I must have missed her somehow: I couldn't exactly say as to that," Ben sufficiently defined himself to Mrs. Kimber, and she met the revelation with womanly pity.

Turning to her daughter, she said, "Why, Deb, the feller's crazy. He talks jest as Sol Mather used to, down to Eas'port, 'fore I was married. He kep' a-talkin' nonsense, an' sayin' right over agin any thing anybody else said, jest like this one."

For a while they stood there, questioning Ben, to little purpose, and finally led him to the house. A good and bounteous supper was spread for him, and hunger and digestion were valorous thereat.

A certain young man, Algie Burnson by name, stood in the doorway, and sneered now and then at "the crazy fellow." What has Algie Burnson come home for, so much in advance of the rest of his party? Look out, Debby! A youngster who has the succession to an earldom is no match for you. And why, among all the mysteries, should such a sturdy young woman as you feel the softer, gentler feminine emo-

tions at sight of such a lollipop as this young aristocrat? Look out, Debby! go carefully! That boy is only playing with you.

And the play is disappointing to him this evening, for Deb happens to be so much taken up with Ben. And now it must end altogether; for here come the troop of holiday Nimrods for whom and their fraternity Si Kimber's Place exists.

With this party returning from the hunt was Si Kimber himself. A bluff, hearty fellow was Si, — a Nova-Scotian, who had floated, all through his earlier years, on Fundy waters and in St. Mary's; floated, in his early manhood, to the Grand Menan, to Calais, up the St. John's to the lumber district, and thence to Eastport.

Picking up a wife here in the person of Miss Bathepha Hutchins, Si went to floating again, penetrating the regions of the unknown as far as Rhode Island. Providence River and the contrary waters of Narragansett presented little attraction to Si Kimber; and again he floated off, — floated westward, northward, eastward, ever uneasy, ever looking out for sheets of water, never content to sleep twice in the same bed. How Baffy, his wife, liked this business, — this fashion of sailing round the world, — is not recorded. It is written that when Si finally settled down at Little Bear Lake, built the hostelry, and nailed the signboard in its place, she expressed herself briefly in these words: "Wall, Si, looks 's if we was anchored now, don't it? I'm glad on it."

And so were many gay gentlemen who had been

at the mercy of a variety of hosts in the northern wilds, but remembered none of them with such respect, and even affection, as Si Kimber.

"Hellaw, Bawffy!" exclaimed Si, as he looked upon Ben for the first time. "Who's thus?"

"*I* d'n know," responded Baffy. "Me 'n' Deb foun' him a-settin' by the gate [?], an' he looked so awful tired 'n' hungry we fetched him in." In lower voice she added, "You let him be, Si: he's kin' o' flutterin' in the head. You rec'lec' Sol Mather, down to Eas'port, don't ye?"

"Thot ben't Sol Mather, Bawffy, no more as I be a—a hoss!"

"Who said you was a hoss? No more he ain't, nuther."

Si went off to his work, grumbling a little. But when did a really big-hearted man ever succeed in an attempt to make a little-hearted man of himself? Si gave it up, laid down his axe, and returned to the kitchen, merely to look in at the door, and call out, "Hellaw, Bawffy! what you goin' to do wi' yon?"

"Keep 'im, of course," was the short but decisive answer.

This nettled Si somewhat, and he closed the door, —only for a moment, however; for he quickly returned, and, going boldly up to Ben, asked, "Now, who be ye, mister? an' whar' d'ye coom fro'?"

"Oh, yes! to be sure," said Ben; "what's *your* news?"

"Wull, Bawffy, I be dashed! This be the queerest, h'oddest thing *I* ever see!" said Si.

A great pity had been growing in Si's heart. Small pity has an enormous vocabulary, great pity a small one. Si's expressed itself thus: —

"Say, Bawffy, take good care of yon, will 'ee?"

"That I will, Si," replied Baffy. "You go 'long."

And thus Ben found a refuge among as kind-hearted and hospitable a family as ever made the hunting months the crown of the year for jolly hunters.

CHAPTER X.

AN UNHOLY COMPACT.

A FULL week Ben Hollins passed at Si Kimber's, the days gliding by full of that simple contentment with which persons in his condition are blessed. He took little note of the goings and comings of the sporting party; and, indeed, Bly Folliss, Germaine Parson, and the others took little note of him.

To Macrae it was a week of trouble. Bolstered by his own determination, and by an accession of courage which he derived from meditations upon the prosperity of his past, he flitted from town to town, and from hamlet to hamlet, in a vain search. Towards the close of the week, he began to believe that Ben had really perished in the railway-accident; and the horror of it all but turned him back to Millington. Nevertheless, he telegraphed to Mr. Hollins, sending messages of hope, and inquiring whether news of Ben had been received at Millington. Again and again he pretended to have heard of Ben, or of some wanderer who might be Ben.

And at last, on the seventh day, he arrived at Patton Junction, wearied out, half sick, almost despairing. Alighting from the wagon which had brought him, he stood upon the platform at the station irresolute.

Which way should he go? Back to Millington to sit there in fear and uncertainty, or eastwards to search and search?

The rumbling premonition of an answer to this question was already audible. It was coming by train from Little Bear Lake. The train was due at 3.15, and the station clock already marked that time within two minutes. Macrae heard the whistle, and walked to the upper end of the station, where the tracks of the Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Athabasca Railway are switched into those of the main line. He walked close up to this incoming train, merely to watch: he had fallen into a habit of watching every thing, on the mere chance of discovering Ben Hollins.

"Confound the luck!" he suddenly exclaimed. "Here is Bly Folliss."

That gentleman spied Macrae instantly, and cried out, "Is this you, Tom Macrae? Where have you kept yourself of late? Ever been up to Little Bear Lake, Tom? Parsy and I always — By the way, you never met Germaine Parson. — Hi! Parsy, see here! Mr. Macrae, Mr. Parson — Mr. Parson, Mr. Macrae. Mac was my old chum at Dideron's, Parsy." And he rattled on with a multitude of those detached, telegraphic sentences which enter so largely into the use of this ungrammatical age.

"See that fellow over there, Tom? That one with the cigar? That is the next Earl of Blankdom, as likely as not. Used to be a capital fellow, over on the Continent, but this climate seems to be bad for him. He's a cad, between you and me. Falls in love with

'the landlady's little daughter,' and all that sort of thing. You would have enjoyed it, Tom, I know you would, to see him turn green because our little daughter up at the lake chose to be attentive to a lunatic fellow, with a blazing red head, who strayed up that way."

Macrae had almost asked, in the excitement of the moment, *when* the lunatic appeared at Little Bear Lake, and what his whole personal appearance might be. But he checked himself, and only said, —

"A lunatic!"

"Yes," replied Bly, "a poor crazy fellow, completely gone; didn't utter an original remark from morning to night."

There was a sudden hurrying to and fro of porters with rattling luggage-trucks, with gun-cases and baskets; there followed a deafening whistle or two, a scraping, grating grind of wheels, and the afternoon express on the main line came to a stop, discharged a few passengers, took on the party of sportsmen and was off again. As Bly Folliss placed his foot upon the car-step, he called out, —

"Which way, Tom?"

"Up the Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Athabasca — ah — a few miles, on business for my uncle," replied Macrae; wishing, a moment after, that he had pretended not to hear.

Five miles down the road, Folliss said, —

"Wonder what brought Tom Macrae down here!"

"Couldn't tell you, Bly," replied Germaine Parson. "I never saw your friend before, and didn't much like the look of him, to tell you the truth."

Bly smiled, as he rejoined, "You are candid, at all events, Parsy. How dare you attack my friends?"

"Oh! beg pardon, Bly. Is he really a friend?" asked Parson.

"You are right, Parsy, — always right. Tom was not the old Macrae of Dideron days. He acted queerly — wasn't cordial. Country law business is bad for him. And, now that I think of it, I wonder what he is practising law for over here! They say he has more money than he knows what to do with, and is heir to an estate in Ireland."

"Toronto papers! Morning papers!" shouted the train-boy; and, before he had reached the farther end of the car, Germaine Parson's eye lighted upon an article in "The Globe," which he had purchased, and he exclaimed, "Listen, Bly! 'It is no longer to be doubted, that young Mr. Hollins of Millington met his death in the railway accident near Windham. His intimate friend, T. Macrae, Esq., who is almost inconsolable, still persists in keeping up the search for him, but we fear it will be in vain.' What is it all about, Bly?"

A moment after, Parson read aloud again. "Here is a despatch from Millington, Bly. 'Mr. Hollins, who wandered off last week, while insane, has been heard from.'" The despatch was all wrong, of course; despatches are sometimes, and not seldom they disagree with editorials and items. But this one opened Germaine Parson's eyes somewhat; and he repeated the words "insane," "wandered off," "last week," "T. Macrae," over and over; and at last cried out, —

"Come, Bly, wake up. Who is this Mr. Hollins?"

"I have heard of him often, and met him once," answered Bly. "He went insane some time ago, I think."

"Bly, what if our lunatic at Si Kimber's was the very man? He certainly had the air of a gentleman."

These two hereupon plunged into a serious discussion of the subject, weighing all the facts known to them. The net result was, that, when the train reached Oxley, Germaine Parson alighted, and made inquiry for the next train westward; being fully determined to go back to Little Bear Lake, and rescue Ben Hollins, if indeed the lunatic should prove to be Ben Hollins.

At eleven o'clock the following morning, he was driven up to Si Kimber's door.

"Woy, Muster Pairson, wot on earth 'as brote you back?" exclaimed the proprietor. "'Ave you forgot something mebbe?"

"No, Si, I came back to see you about that young man, that crazy young man."

"Wull, now — Bawffy, do 'ee 'ear Muster Pairson? Las' night, Muster Pairson, comes a young gent, an' says as how he's 'eard we 'ad a crazy young man 'ere, an' as 'e was 'is h'own brother. So I makes Bawffy keep the pore feller out o' sight, and says I, 'Draw 'im, draw 'is picter for me, now come!' So the young gent, 'e h'ups an' tells the very colors of 'is 'air an' h'eyes, an' the make of 'is clo'es, an' h'every think about 'im, down to a sleeve-button."

"And what then, Si?"

"Wull, we brings 'im h'out then; an' blest if the pore feller didn't walk right h'up to 'is brother an' calls 'im Tom, an' seems h'awful glad to see 'im like! So I says to Bawffy as we 'adn't no rights fur to keep 'im, an' the young gent, 'e treated us 'an'some."

"Have they gone?"

"Bless ye, Muster Pairson, went right off las' night. The gent says as they lived 'cross country. Now, where was this, Bawffy?"

"Millington?" suggested Parson.

"No — o — o! 'Twa'n't no Mill'ngton. Said they was farmers, but they was mighty genteel farmers; wasn't they, Bawffy?"

"Yes," replied Baffy Kimber. "But, Si, I guess he didn't tell nothin' but truth. He was too glib to do any thing else."

With which piece of reasoning all the Kimbers were satisfied, but not so Germaine Parson. For the life of him, he could not describe Tom Macrae. The one prominent characteristic, his swarthiness, was all he could safely dwell upon. Asking if the stranger was a dark man, the Kimbers were equally at sea; and, while Debby thought the stranger was dark, Mrs. Kimber was doubtful, and Si pronounced him "no darker as you or h'I be, Muster Pairson."

There was nothing left to Germaine Parson, but to take up his journey again. At Patton, next day, he determined to telegraph to Millington, and did so in these words. "A young man, who may be your son, was at Little Bear Lake up to last night." This message he sent to Mr. Hollins, giving also his own

address in Toronto. To his amazement, he received a despatch soon after his arrival there, to this effect: "Thanks. Have traced man at Little Bear. Not the right person. (Signed) T. Macrae."

"That settles one thing," said Germaine to Bly Folliss. "If Macrae is in Millington to-day, it is not very likely that he was driving across country last night from Little Bear Lake." Another of those peculiar conclusions which almost all men are fain to satisfy themselves with, on the principle, that, where there is no corn, husks must be taken with satisfaction.

It is needless to say that it was really Thomas Macrae who took Ben from Si Kimber's. They were driven to the station, a distance of four or five miles; and there Macrae found, to his chagrin, that there was no train until early in the morning. All night he sat there with Ben, chafing and fretting. He tried to reason with himself, but the shadows of the darker hours crowded around him in illogical shapes. He slept and waked, until it seemed as if all the days had turned to nights.

As morning approached, new energy, new calmness, new determination, came to him. He made out a little programme on a page of his note-book, read it over many times, committed it thoroughly to memory, and tore the paper into flakes

What he wrote was this: —

"1. Find a safe place to keep Ben in. *Mem.:* the widow's.

"2. Go to Millington.

"3. Arrange with C. D.

"4. The finish."

As he threw the fragments of paper out into the night air, a morning gust of wind swept by, carrying the dead and dying leaves in showers. Macrae shivered; for he thought a voice came out of the trees, saying, "Beware! for, as these leaves die, so die and fall the schemes of men; and, as I still live, so lives on the world, careless of the dead and fallen."

Another voice sounded in his ear, saying, "Be not fearful, Thomas Macrae. It will be only a journey or two: a little forethought and care, a bold, free course. Then marry the girl you love, and" —

At last the early train started. It was still dark, but to Macrae the car-lamp was as full of joy as the sun himself. It was a grand enjoyment to be moving once more. Now for victory, — victories, in fact! Now for the greatest piece of work he had ever done! Now for the first great trial of his strength! And as Macrae thought of this he braced himself against the side of the car, and heard the wood-work crack, with intense satisfaction.

It is but a step from strength to goodness, and Macrae took that step in his rapidly varying thoughts. He began to pose as an instrument of Providence. He had not thought of this before; but really, after all, he was not doing such a wicked action. Look at the good that was likely to flow out of this. Betty Hartley would be relieved from a drudging, hopeless life; Mr. and Mrs. Hollins would be dwelling no longer in a horrible uncertainty as to their son's future. Ben would be just as well off. Poor fellow! what dif

ference could it make to him whether he lived his void existence in Millington or in Arboe? Carney Dugan would have her hopes fulfilled. Bless the woman! curse her! And as the vile association came vividly to mind Macrae arose, and paced the length of the car, flushed and tumultuous. The fever was fitful: it passed, and Macrae sat again to contemplate the crowning-point, the climax of all this false reasoning, — himself, himself, — his hopes, his pleasures.

Five miles north of Patton Junction is an insignificant hamlet, which has the singular fortune of possessing almost as many names as houses. Here Macrae left the train, and made his way at once to a small, neat dwelling, at whose door he greeted a plain middle-aged widow-woman familiarly, with the words, "Good-morning. I have found him."

The dame was honestly pleased, and all because this dark young man had only yesterday made inquiry of her concerning his lost "brother." In fact, it was from this very hamlet, Polynomia, that Macrae had driven over to Patton Junction.

"And now," said Macrae, "I have a favor to ask. Would you be willing to take care of my brother over night? He is perfectly harmless, and will obey you implicitly."

To be left with an insane person on your hands is not the most pleasant outlook. But what will not a good woman do for very love of doing good? It required but a moment's reflection, therefore, to bring this good, simple creature to the point; and having said "Yes," it followed that arrangements were quickly

made for Ben's stay, and for Macrae's departure for Windham, the next station west of Patton, where he could catch the afternoon express west.

And now the stimulus of more rapid motion came upon him. His fiery nature sprang into accord with its new surroundings; he glowed with energy; he felt free.

Arrived at Millington, his rooms were re-opened, the rejuvenating influence of the bath and the toilet invoked; and presently Macrae stepped forth into the streets as blithe as any man who walked there.

And whither should he go first of all? To Elmswoods, with the easily told lie upon his lips, that he had not found Ben.

"A despatch has just come from a Mr. Parson," said Mr. Hollins. "Please read it, Thomas."

"Yes," said Macrae: "I heard of this yesterday, and made inquiry. It turned out to be a young man from one of the northern towns in Grey County,—Glenelg I think."

Thus ruthlessly was a slender, tender thread of hope which was winding around Ephraim Hollins's heart torn away, and the suffering man sent back into the darkness to think of his son as dead and graveless.

Why need we listen to the talk of these two, with its dismal fruitage of sorrow for the one, and reckless deceit in the other? It would be harrowing to witness the grief, the despair, the almost fiendish coldness and hotness, the groping down into deeper and deeper depths of falsehood; hardly less so to write of them.

Macrae finally arose. He had business to-night, — yes, foul business. As he went, Mr. Hollins remembered Germaine Parson's despatch, and spoke of it again to Macrae.

Quite readily Macrae said, "I am going past the station, Mr. Hollins. Shall I answer it for you?"

"If you please, Thomas."

And Germaine Parson was not the only man who was thus deceived by specious appearances of language. At Elmswoods four sorrowing ones were content to accept falsehood for truth. The garb of virtue in which the teller was clad was only a garb of gauzy texture; but it would, manifestly, have deceived the very elect.

There remained one other upon whom Macrae must cast this same glamour. The night came, offering to every evil impulse of man opportunity and scope. And among the troop of evil-minded ones, seeking place to murder, to rob, to soil virtue, to debauch body and soul, this novice in crime went forth tempting and tempted.

Down among the silent mills, through the deserted yards, picking his way among all the accumulations of by-paths, went Macrae, until he reached the dimly lighted hovel where a human being, and that a woman, kept up a rough semblance of living.

Carney was waiting. She knew the hour would come. For a whole week she had waited for it. She was certain that Macrae would open the door, and call her forth. And what should she do then? Go out into the streets, and cry aloud? Betray this evil-doer?

That would be to call suspicion upon herself, to provoke her own destruction.

And now, even while she was debating with herself, considering innumerable ill-assorted sequences of self-questioning and answering, there was a creak, a jar, a rustle, a gentle closing and even barring of the door; and Macrae stood before Carney with a smile upon his face.

"Well, old woman," he said, "I am here again."

"An' where is Misther Ben?" asked Carney.

"That is my affair. The question is, — are you ready?"

"O Misther Thomas! for the love of" —

"Never mind that now," said Macrae. "We can attend to love some other time. Business first."

"But, Misther Thomas" —

"Now, see here, Mrs. Dugan," said Macrae: "I have not one minute to waste in arguing this matter all over again. Are you ready, or not?"

"Yes, Misther Thomas, I'm dhat; but stop a bit. Dhis will ind in misery an' distraction for you an' me. I see it comin' fast. I dhramed it last night, an' dhe night before. Dhe ghost uv my Barney" —

"Stuff, nonsense!" Macrae exclaimed impatiently. "There are no ghosts that I am afraid of, Mrs. Dugan. But, upon my word, if you keep up this sort of thing, there may be ghosts in the play yet."

Now followed a round of threatenings, expostulations, coaxings, entreaties, dark hints of betrayal and clear notifications of revenge, compromises, yieldings, promises, and all the details of an unholy compact.

In the end the woman had to all appearance yielded herself, body and soul, to the man.

Macrae's instructions to Carney were brief and clear, as he considered it needful they should be; but they might as well have been as intricate as the scrawls upon an obelisk. For they came to nothing, not because Carney's intentions were other than Macrae's, but because a higher power than either of them interfered.

"Here, Carney," he said, "is a ticket for Toronto. And here, money to buy a ticket there for Montreal. Now mind what I tell you! Take the night-mail at 3.45, — to-night, you understand. When you arrive at Montreal, go directly to Quebec. Here is money. Wait at Quebec until I come. Hold on: where shall I find you?"

"At Patsy Doniphan's, to be sure, in T'ree Pistol Street. Where else?"

"Where is that? In Lower Town, or in St. Roch?"

"In naythe r: it's in Quebec."

"*Peste!* you know nothing about Quebec, then."

"Little enough, thrue for you, Misther Thomas, seein' I was dhere for t'ree weeks, an' niver wanc't out of Patsy's house, be rayson of dhe say-sickness."

"And that was thirty years ago? Patsy Doniphan may be dead or in Texas by this time. And, now that I think of it, you may as well let this Doniphan alone, and any other friends you may have in Quebec. Go to some quiet place near the river; and now — mark! you can find the post-office, can't you? Be there

every morning at eight, and every evening at six. I will meet you there."

Left now to herself, Carney elaborated a long farewell to Millington, and to the roof which had sheltered her these many years. And, in the darkness of the hours which bound night and morning, she closed her door for the last time, saying to it, "It's not much I'm takin', an' it's little I'm lavin'. I've all me parly furnichy on me back, an' it's a light load. Sure, I've as good a right as any of dhem to go to me own funeral, which I'm goin' to it now, wid dhat murdherin' say a-rollin' an' a-pitchin' dhe head almost aff me."

Carney must be left now to make her way to Quebec alone, which she did without let or hinderance. For ourselves, it will be better to go first-class with Thomas Macrae and Ben Hollins.

CHAPTER XI.

a. INTO DARKNESS. *b.* INTO LIGHT.

LEAVING Carney, Macrae returned to his own quarters in Barony Street. Here he quickly wrote a note to Ephraim Hollins, to the effect that his interest in Ben was such that he could not rest. "I have laid out, therefore," he wrote, "a new route, and shall make as diligent inquiry in that direction as I have already made towards the north and east. I feel that we ought not to give up yet. I am sorry not to see you again. I leave on the night-mail, for no time should be lost."

A similar note to his uncle, a few brief regrets to friends who had left invitations in his absence, and three or four letters to more distant correspondents, occupied the remaining time; and at quarter to four in the morning Macrae boarded the train, leaving behind him the tearful gratitude of a family of mourners, and a vast respect of the men and women of Millington at large. What friendly devotion! what self-sacrifice! A dozen young men were half-inspired to go forth upon the quest; but somehow, on second thought, a great reliance upon Thomas Macrae sprang up, and the town settled down to a belief that he, and he alone, had been commissioned to bring this affair to a

happy termination — if, indeed, Ben Hollins were not already dead.

Macrae did not travel far that night. He made sure that Carney took the train, and at half-past four alighted at Windham. A lonely hour at the station stood between his arrival and the waking of the people of that sleepy village; but Macrae endured it, and by six he had found a conveyance, had hired it for the day, and was well on his way to Polynomia.

The smoke was curling around the chimneys when Macrae arrived at the widow's house. She was up, and busy in multiform little household duties. But Ben was lying in bed, wide awake: he had not been *told* to get up. Macrae remedied this very quickly; for he was hungry, and the widow had evidently been postponing some of the more savory of her preparations for breakfast, out of mistaken politeness to Ben.

Breakfast despatched, this gentleman seemed in no hurry to go, whereat the widow wondered. She had not had such company as this, however, for many a year, and was content to have him stay as long as he would. So the morning hours passed, the long roll of noon sounded, and still her guests sat in her little parlor, the one busy with papers and letters and note-books; the other, with pebbles and any trifle, making occasional rushes towards the door, as if on business suddenly intent, and returning in a melancholy fashion to Macrae's side.

Towards evening, however, there was a sudden change. The horses were ordered up; Ben was brought out; the widow was pressed to receive a

parting *douceur*, and this strange party left Polynomia.

"Drive to Patton Junction," was Macrae's brief order; and it was executed as well and as quickly as good horseflesh is able. It was dark, very dark, when they drove up to the station. No trains were expected, and but one light was hung out as yet. Macrae dismissed his farmer-coachman, and looked cautiously about.

"That Parson might happen to be here," he said to himself. But Germaine was sitting, that very moment, in Bly Folliss's snuggery in Toronto, discussing this same Thomas Macrae.

Connected with the Patton Junction station — over the railway-rooms, in fact — are to be found quite sufferable accommodations for a few travellers, in the shape of clean beds and a plain breakfast or supper. Macrae had bespoken a room, and hustled Ben into it before the station-master and inn-keeper had time to notice any of Ben's peculiarities; and out of that room Ben was not seen until, at a quarter before five next morning, Macrae brought him hurriedly forth, with barely time enough to board the eastward train.

On the way, at last! and whither? whither, thou son of affliction? Verily, if those who named thee had been prophets, they would not have called thee Ben-yamin, which is Felix, the Happy One, Son of good fortune; but rather Ben-oni, Son of my sorrow.

And whither art thou tending, also, dark-eyed, tempted, overcome, and desperate one?

It was broad daylight when they reached Toronto,

and Macrae was ready with expedients. In one minute after alighting from the train he was seated in a public carriage with Ben, and holding colloquy with the driver.

"Take me to some very quiet house, will you? Not the Rossin, or the Queen's, or any of those large houses, — some place near by."

And what better could a man with such a roving commission do than to drive a respectable length of time, and finally deliver his passengers at the "Prince of Cumberland" hotel, just one square away? Not the kind of house for Thomas Macrae to stay at, but to-day it suited him admirably. There would be no Bly Folliss or Germaine Parson here to spy him out and ask questions. And here, as yesterday, it suited him to remain within the whole day; for it was the night he preferred to travel in just now, and there was no occasion for haste. Macrae had learned his lesson well.

It was now Friday, Sept. 14. That night's journey would carry him to Montreal; Saturday he would go on to Quebec. "The Breton," steamship, was to sail on Wednesday. Carney and Ben could be put on board on Monday if necessary. The intervening time would pass.

Nearly an hour after sunset Macrae walked down to the station. Once seated in the car, the first thing he did was to tell Ben to go to sleep; which Ben proceeded dutifully to do, so wrapped and covered that his own father, passing through the dimly-lighted coach, would never have known him. Nor would he

have known Macrae either; for that gentleman took good care to cover his face, and to look at no man or woman, lest he should be observed in turn, and possibly recognized. No sleeping-car for these two: the people who might know Macrae or Ben were sure to be there. It was uncomfortable, sitting up all night; but it was safer.

At Napanee there was a long and ominous silence. Passengers grew uneasy, and one by one went out, returning to yawn, and say uncomplimentary things of the management, the road, and the equipment. Macrae heard them talking about "half an hour," then "an hour." His watch indicated two o'clock, at last three, and four. Then came a shrieking of whistles and blowing of steam, and they moved again. Manifestly Montreal would not be reached on Saturday morning. And what — thought Macrae — will the *day* bring forth? And what, if this, and this, and that, and something else? What if Carney Dugan should have died on the way?

The sluice-gates of imagination and anxiety opened upon this man, and let in upon him a veritable flood of self-torment. And ever, in the lulls of that mighty rush, came the still small voice, whispering, "Not too late, Thomas Macrae: go back to Millington, and deliver this unfortunate to peace and safety again!" Of avail, was this? No, not with those other voices, loud and fierce, drowning out the gentler one, and fairly shouting in his ear, "Don't you do it, Macrae! Don't be a coward. Send him over the sea, and then go back to Millington to marry the girl you love!"

Day came, full day, and the train had only reached Brockville. Macrae bade Ben sit still, and boldly went through the entire train. Not a man or woman was there in it whom he knew. This gave him some relief, but he lost its value in the vexatious delays which beset that particular train. All day long alternations of perfect confidence, of tormenting doubt, heated and chilled him. A score of new points, which he had entirely overlooked, came into view, and assumed huge proportions. He called himself a fool, one minute, for embarking in such an undertaking; the next, for having any doubt of ultimate success. Thoughts of Betty Hartley crowded into his mind, at once condemning and urging him on. Once he awoke from a day-doze in terror; for he dreamed that his own father was standing over him, with a scornful look upon his face, and ready to fell him to the ground. And there sat Ben, smiling, and greeting him, as he started violently, with, "I say, Tom, what's *your* news?"

News, indeed! more than he would have liked to tell. The ghosts had begun to come.

The wearying day was passed at length, and Macrae found temporary diversion in the excitement of the arrival and transfer at Montreal. Two hours of waiting ensued, during which Macrae was thankful that there were such occupations for humanity as eating and drinking; and they were off once more, Ben so thoroughly tired out with all this jolting and bustle that he was soon asleep, but Macrae alive to every sound and sight. If he attempted to sleep, he

dreamed of horrid conflicts: waking, he was in a tumult of thought. Suppose Carney should play him false. Suppose his uncle should die, and he should have to go to Briartop to take charge, and should take Betty with him, — oh, delicious thought! — what could be done with Ben?

"Fool!" cried Macrae aloud. And the travellers in the next seat looked around at him, one even saying, —

"Beg pardon, sir!"

"Excuse me," was Macrae's ready apology. "I must have been dreaming."

In the later hours of the night, as he approached the intended end of his journey, Macrae entered upon a prolonged and terrific battle with his conscience. The enormity of his crime — a crime so far from the thoughts of the law-makers, that, had Macrae been arrested at any stage of his proceedings thus far, it would have been no easy matter to name it — pressed sorely upon him. Again and again his good angel came with sweet suggestions and promise of future peace. But the evil had the nine points now, against the one point. From the sickening, depressing, terrifying influence of his agitation, Macrae rose to strength again. Anon he was plunged into a raging sea of self-accusation.

At Becancour he looked at his time-table, and exclaimed, "Only forty miles more! curse it, an hour and three-quarters to cover that! Why don't they put on steam and fly?" The station-lights were out as they came lazily up to Lyster platform. At

Methot's Mills passengers came aboard, three or four rough men; and Macrae found himself scanning their faces as if to discover whether they had ever committed crimes, and whether the recollection was galling to them. But they roared and laughed, chattering in a broken tongue, to that degree that Macrae laughed with them; and having concluded, with the absurd, distorted logic of such a man at such a time, that these men had at least been robbers and murderers, he was cheered for the moment, and thought within himself, "Oh! I shall forget too, and be happy and jovial."

"Chaudière!" cried the guard, and Macrae counted nine a score of times. "Only nine miles more?" he asked of the now awakened traveller in front of him.

"Wake up, Ben," he shouted. "We are almost there."

"I am sure I am very glad," said Ben. "I thought we should be there some time or other — ha, ha! I was never kicked by a goose yet."

The traveller looked round at Ben, and then, more searchingly than Macrae liked, at his companion, finally putting his finger to his forehead, and nodding toward Ben.

"*Da'g'reux?*" asked the traveller, in that awful *patois*, neither French nor English nor Hottentot.

"*Oui*," replied Macrae in more accurate French, "*terriblement.*"

The traveller instantly arose, and stood at the door for the remainder of the journey.

An arrival at a railway terminus on Sunday morning

has its peculiarities. The men are working, but evidently under protest. Trunks are handled more gently on Sunday morning than on any other; conductors, office-men, are more polite; travellers less hurried, less disposed to elbow you out of the way, to poke umbrellas into you at hap-hazard, to squeeze past you.

It was a quiet entry, therefore, that Macrae and Ben made into Point Levi; and still more quietly they stepped upon the wharf on the Quebec side. The question, where to quarter himself, was easily settled by Macrae. No more of these bad-smelling "Prince of Cumberland" inns would he endure. He would play his game more boldly now. In twenty minutes, therefore, the register at the "St. Louis" showed the names of Thomas Macrae and — at Macrae's dictation — of Adolphus Janes; this last being written by Ben himself in a queer, cramped hand, utterly unlike the signature of Benjamin Hollins in the Millington letter-book.

At half-past seven Macrae was at the post-office, not to ask for letters, — for, even if he had expected any, Sunday morning was a poor time to look for them, — but to find Carney Dugan. Till eight o'clock he waited, but no sign of his accomplice was vouchsafed. The same experiment at the evening hour came to the same result; and again on Monday morning. There was mischief in it, — trouble, disaster.

Macrae bethought himself of Doniphan, of whom Carney had spoken. To Trois Pistoles Street he went, therefore, in the suburb St. Roch; and, sure enough,

there was the establishment of Patrick Doniphan, a prosperous look spreading out upon a comparatively new stone building of that mongrel appearance which at once perplexes you. It might be only a drinking-place; it might be an inn in full character: at all events, the drinking accommodations stood out very prominently. Macrae entered, and, to obtain the good-will of a soured young Ganymede, gave an order and paid for it.

"I am looking," he then said in confidential directness, "for Mr. Patrick Doniphan. He must be an older man than yourself."

"An' why shouldn't he be?" answers Ganymede. "A man's faither is ginerally older nor his own son, isn't he?"

"Oh! this is the younger Mr. Doniphan, then? Might I see your father?"

Surlily young Doniphan opened a door in the rear of the apartment, and called out in loud tones, "Faither, dhere's a gintleman"—

A not unpleasant voice, with a queer savor of consequence and grand pretension in it, sounded back, in reply, "A gintleman? Well, dhere's more gintlemin dhan wan. I'm wan; an' I wish yourself was another, Tim, an' dhat makes two of us."

Old "Patsy" was a late-riser, and in truth was not out of bed when Macrae called. Surly Tim had the visitor all to himself, therefore; and without waiting long, he inquired, "Is it ship business?"

"Yes, — no," answered Macrae; "not exactly: connected with the sailing of "The Breton," how-

ever. The fact is, I'm looking for an old servant of ours, who is going home, — Mrs. Carney Dugan. She spoke of your father as an old friend, and I thought I might find her here."

Not a word would Tim give back in reply. Instead, he sauntered off, slowly opened the door already mentioned, and disappeared. In time — his own time — he returned, and his aged father with him.

"Wud ye be plazed to take a sate, sir?" asked this consequential personage; "and *re*-late your business, sir, — ouch, but dhe informities of age, sir, is havocin' dhe free circumlocution of me joints, sir, to dhat *ix*-tint dhat I wish meself deaf an' dumb sometimes to dhe pains an' pangs dhat's in me!"

Macrae expressed his sympathy, and Doniphan quietly made mental notes.

"Your name is not McGovern, now, I'd bet a keg?" asked Doniphan.

"No, my name is Macrae."

"And did you say you was from Guelph, sir?"

"No: I am from Derry, Ireland," was Macrae's reply.

This questioning perplexed Macrae; but he answered honestly the first query, the second one cautiously, and then instantly took up the interrogation himself.

"I am inquiring for Mrs. Carney Dugan, whom I half-expected to find here, Mr. Doniphan. Do you happen to know any thing of her?"

"Do we know ary Dooger, Tim?" asked old "Patsy."

"No, an' niver did," replied the surly one.

"Dhe name is familiar to me hearin', Tim; but I've a difficklety in lo*ca*tin' it," continued the old man.

And that was the difficulty all round. Macrae would have rewarded the Doniphans handsomely if they could have located Carney for him; but that was past their powers as well as his. Not many hours earlier they might have done him service.

Macrae could only conclude that he was deserted by Carney, — a wrong conclusion, but tenable in the lack of any ground for a truer and better one. Yet he made inquiries at the shipping-offices, at a score or more of emigrants' stopping-places, of every one who was likely to know absolutely nothing about the lost woman; but not a question did he put to those who could have informed him, — the police. Being something of a lawyer, he had his reasons for that. He knew that your true policeman is a sceptic, and would be quite likely to follow up a fine young man like Thomas Macrae inquiring for such a creature as Carney Dugan; and particularly if he happened to be the policeman on that beat, and to know just where Carney was.

Till Wednesday Macrae kept up the chase, — until the very hour when "The Breton" sailed. Early that day he made inquiry at the steamer's office, and was brusquely told that half the people in the steerage went over under assumed or misunderstood names, and he might go on board and find out for himself. "The Breton" was in mid-stream: so Macrae took

boat, and presented himself to the officer of the deck. Through and through the steerage he went, looking into the remotest corners and most unlikely places. And why should he look here at all? He knew the woman had not money enough to pay her passage. But he was pursuing absurdities now, and for the moment, in his confusion, had lost his clear judgment, and was mingling fictions and facts together.

CHAPTER XII.

DR. BUSHWICK.

THERE were, doubtless, many desperate men in Quebec on Wednesday afternoon, Sept. 19, 18—; but certainly not one more utterly bewildered than a dark young man, who stood watching the steamer "Breton," as she swung loose and took the water on her outward course towards the Atlantic and the eastern world. He had intended to freight that very ship with all his cares and perplexities, with instructions to the invisible agents in the air — those underwriters who land or sink cargoes in a fashion wholly unexpected by worldly shippers and consignees — to deliver these anywhere, somewhere out of sight and reach forever. And here they were, all thrust back upon him, — not a care, not a perplexity, missing.

"What am I to do next?" said Macrae to himself.

The good angel whispered; and the evil ones roared to him as from some deep pit, cajoling, mocking, enticing, taunting him, until he was almost mad.

Mechanically he went out upon the river again, towards Point Levi. He crossed, and went into the railway-station. The *débris* of the last incoming train had been swept into a little heap in the street. A white paper attracted his attention, and Macrae picked

it up. On the reverse he read words which he had assisted to put together. It was a bill offering a round reward for "information concerning a young man, out of his mind, but not violent, who left his home at Millington, Ont.," on such a day. Macrae was aghast.

With the paper still in his hand, he stood gazing purposelessly about, finally staring hard at a great band of blue and yellow, green and black, which came before his eyes, piece by piece, shaping itself in large block letters. PORTLAND, BOSTON, SPRINGFIELD, NEW YORK, and a multitude of other names of cities in the States stood staring at Macrae from the walls, and each one seemed to be struggling to speak to him.

"By Jove! an idea!" he exclaimed, and the despairing, now eager man flew away to his hotel. It was verging upon five o'clock, and at half-past seven a train would leave for the South. That fertile brain revived, and roused itself into activity again with a new purpose, quickly compassing all immediate requirements.

The reward-bill warned Macrae that discovery might not be so very far behind. He must have his wits about him now. More yet, he would stoop, must stoop, to arts which hitherto he had despised. For he was going straight into the jaws of danger.

Macrae had travelled extensively, and knew full well that on the route he now mapped out for himself and Ben, he must meet at Richmond Junction a tide of Canadian travel setting Portland- and Boston-wards. He must of necessity travel with that tide for a few hours at least.

When Ben and he, therefore, left "The St. Louis" that evening, Ben was no longer what the reward-bill declared he was, "of sandy hair and complexion." Ben thought this immensely funny. He laughed, and volunteered the remark that he was "quite a rainbow now;" and even Macrae laughed with him, as the sense of fear and hopelessness was exchanged for the exhilaration of new adventure.

Macrae took tickets for Richmond, then for Newport, then for White River Junction. Glad enough he was, at midnight of Thursday, to hear the last of the echoes aroused by the multitude of engines at this latter place dying away behind him; glad enough to feel that he was clear of the main stream of Canadian travel, that he was breathing air of pure republican consistency unmixed with any border oxygen. He would hardly have cared now if Ben's hair had turned red again. It persistently remained black.

Macrae had tickets now for Springfield, a city which he had never seen. So much the better. Arrived there, and turned out in the early morning into that great breezy place called, in local parlance, "the deepo," he felt, for the first time since leaving Quebec, that he had reached a stopping-place, — a stopping-place, not merely in travel, but in purpose. What to do next, however, was the question. From his window in "The Massasoit," he looked out into the air for an answer, for a suggestion.

Trains were going and coming, crowds of people hurrying hither and thither. Macrae was as ingenious as most men, but this morning he could see no farther

than he had at Millington. To place Ben upon one of these trains, — any one, — ticket him to some out-of-the-way place, and let him go, was his poor impotent thought; and time and time again he rejected it. Fagged as he was, he was not so dull as to be blind to the fact, that these "Yankees" were an inquiring people, that Ben would become an object of interest in Becket or Brookfield, or any other town at which he might be landed. The case would get into the papers; and it was a certainty, that, sooner or later, Ben would be brought back to Millington. Macrae felt himself failing. Many years of honest living were telling upon this novice in dishonesty.

Feeling secure from hazardous observation, Macrae took Ben out for a walk, studying how he should make it the last one. He looked at the river, and a fall from the railway-bridge occurred to him, — keen pursuit by the police also. And his own heart shrank from violence still. Helpless man! — too virtuous yet to become a murderer, — too wicked, too much involved, to do the good which still beckoned him back to peace!

They stood at last upon a street corner, Macrae lost for a moment in abstraction, Ben by his side looking vacantly down upon the ground. At the very moment two other abstracted creatures came in their way, and solved Macrae's case for him in a twinkling.

It was eccentric Dr. Bushwick, and the doctor's eccentric horse, that brought matters to this issue. The doctor was sitting in his gig, lost to every thing on this earth, except a mental speculation, in which he

was completely enveloped and befogged. The horse was jogging along as one who did his own driving, covering little or much ground just as he chose, going to the house of this patient or that as he thought best (for this notable animal really did a deal of Dr. Bushwick's thinking), taking a wide sweep around street-corners, or hugging the gutter-stones if he was so minded.

That horses, as well as human beings, are subject to spiritual influence requires no proof. The good and evil they have done in this world are testimony enough. This particular horse, taking it into his head to turn that particular corner at that particular moment, is an instance in point. Why should he not have followed the ruts, and swept the doctor's gig gracefully through the centre of the road? Instead, he clung so persistently to the very edge, that the outer wheel took Ben Hollins squarely in the back, and sent him flying. The shock awakened all four of these abstracted ones thoroughly. The doctor alighted from his gig, and insisted upon carrying Ben forthwith to his office, Macrae to follow.

An examination showed that Ben's back was proof against gig-wheels drawn by lazy horses, also that Dr. Bushwick had providentially run over an insane man. Then followed a running fire of questions, which need not be repeated: the gist of Macrae's replies will suffice.

According to these, Macrae and his brother (Ben) were two Englishmen travelling in this country. Ben had shown symptoms of insanity during a late trip in

the White Mountains; and Macrae was terribly distressed about it.

Dr. Bushwick was in ecstasies. To this good and gentle man let us give the credit of being a physician *per amore*. Fees were nothing to him; the giving of medicines, and above all the giving of advice, the very delight of his soul. Mental cases were his hobby: he had, in fact, written treatises upon the subject, mostly unintelligible, and in shockingly bad grammar. Occasionally startling truths were to be found in his printed pages, — as, for instance, this: "The Supreme Creator, by this fine mechanism, has caused human actions to be concatenated to the organization."

As a partisan, Dr. Bushwick had been from early times a "brain man;" that is to say, he believed that the brain was the seat of the intellectual and moral faculties. He never excited himself except when in the field against disciples of Bichat. "The born idiot of a Frenchman!" he used to exclaim: "who, but a member of a nation of gastronomes would ever think of maintaining that the seat of the moral and intellectual organism is the bowels and the great sympathetic?" What battering he administered to Bichat's bowel theory! How his blows rained down thick and fast upon Bichat's logic! And no amount of evidence could ever draw him one step nearer to that eminent but mistaken Frenchman, except that in his last printed work he made this cautious admission: that we are "conscious of sensations of a peculiar kind, having either a pleasurable or a painful character, in the epigastrium."

The gentle doctor! — he has gone to his rest now. May no painful sensation ever trouble his spiritual epigastrium, and may he clap his spiritual hands daily over the victory of the brain-school!

Now to make out a certificate consigning a patient to an asylum was one of the dearest joys of Dr. Bushwick's life. If he had had his way, he would ultimately have consigned all the world to the asylums, shrewdly retaining for the last, one of his fellow-physicians, and engaging with him that they should commit each other.

Macrae shook with eagerness, as this good man went more and more deeply into Ben's case. And when the inevitable *finale* was reached, and the opinion pronounced that an asylum was the place for Ben, this strong man gave way and shed tears, broke down utterly, yielded to the nervous pressure of ten days' alternating fears and hopes.

What could Dr. Bushwick do but soothe and comfort him?

"Much better, my dear sir, much better every way," he said kindly. "Think of your brother's comfort, sir, and of your own; for I must be candid with you. I fear that the patient is approaching the paroxysmal state, and that he will soon become violent. I discover signs of *plica Polonica*. Look!" and the deep Æsculapian lifted up a section of Ben's hair.

"Do you observe the redness — sandiness — of the new hair? Intense mental action is going on, sir, — like a volcano. Every hair on your brother's head will turn, and of course the explosion must come some

day. I beg you to remember that the dram of prevention is worth more than the ton of cure."

"Would it be a long confinement, doctor?" asked Macrae.

"Looks to me, sir, like a case for life. True, patients do recover nowadays in the most extraordinary manner. I sometimes think that insanity is spending itself, like the plague and the cholera, and may finally disappear. But I have my doubts in this young man's case."

It was with no little difficulty that Macrae could keep out of sight — even out of unsuspicious Dr. Bushwick's sight — his eagerness to get to the end of this matter. Together they discussed public asylums and private, near and distant, large and small.

At six o'clock that evening, lighter-hearted Thomas Macrae was on his way towards Elysium. Virtue sat by his side, — that is to say, one of Macrae's attendant imps clad in Virtue's robes, and masking for the occasion with immense success; for Macrae had compromised with his conscience. He had said to himself, "I am going to put Ben into a private asylum, — at least, just the same thing as a private asylum. I have counted the cost, and shall pay it. Lucky fellow! to have that much done for him! And, now that I think of it, this is vastly better than sending him over the ocean. What a stupid I was! Much obliged to you, Mrs. Dugan, for running away!"

Macrae mentally noted down a memorandum, "to hunt up that woman, and send her out of the way," and went on with his self-gratulations: —

"And, as for the good people of Millington, I am doing them a service. What folly to go on wasting their lives in the care of a lunatic!"

In due time, or rather in time, not an hour too early, — two whole years, in fact, behind time, — Ben Hollins was placed in the custody of men whose business it is, not simply to *keep* and *watch* and *guard* the insane, but to *cure* them.

Like many other people, and intelligent ones too, Macrae looked upon the asylum as a prison, and upon its inmates as prisoners serving out a life-sentence. Its atmosphere, to his uninstructed imagination, was that of the grave; and he had heard and read of the "living death" which is supposed to reign in the asylum, until he believed in that insane contradiction. You may be sure he was not anxious to remain long at the asylum where he gave Ben up. The north wind was blowing, or the "Duke of Wellington" was unable to find his sword, or some other disturbing element was at work, — at all events, Macrae did not relish the noises he heard. He was nervous and half-exhausted; and it was not re-assuring, while walking through one of the wards with Dr. Peterson, to be touched upon the elbow, and find a weird old face turned towards him, and to hear a squeaking voice saying, "I'm going to pray to cure that man; head man pay the bill; don't tell."

Skilfully avoiding any dependence upon public benefit, because public benefit might lead to public inquiry, Macrae left with the proper officer a sum sufficient to cover Ben's expenses for three months,

told his tale of being an English traveller, gave the doctor a card bearing the address, —

E. P. HALLOWELL,

TORONTO, ONT.

POST OFFICE.

and took his departure.

Walking down the avenue of hickories, Macrae sang softly to himself, —

"There's joy in the mountains;
There's life in the fountains;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing, —
The rain is over and gone."

CHAPTER XIII.

HICKORY HALL.

NATURE has made the locality of Ben Hollins's final refuge a charming one, — just the place to quiet overtasked nerves and soothe distracted minds. Leaving the railway-station, you pass into a street where business-places and homes are in near neighborhood. Ten minutes' walk will bring you to a gentle ascent, down which the western breeze comes to meet you, laden with the fragrance of the season if it be summer, or with icy chill in winter. At the top of this ascent you stop, attracted by the wide-spread prospect. Down below in the town looms up the court-house, high above every other building. Dwarfish houses, churches, stables, and stores are grouped about it, as if the whole town wished it to be understood that here justice, and nothing but justice, was the sole want and reliance. To the right, to the left, behind you, hills roll upon one another far away into the blue distance, with a glimpse of water filling in a gap or two. The most noticeable feature of all this landscape is, perhaps, the row of hills confronting you as you look over beyond the town. One hour these hills are dazzling green, another misty blue, and again a golden tinge comes over them, — a glorious façade,

by the way, for the sun-burst, at the edge of evening.

We pass on through a triple gateway, and find ourselves in a broad avenue lined with giant hickory-trees, whence the name "Hickory Hall." It is seven hundred feet, by measurement, from the gate to a triangle of greensward enlivened by a basket of rustic-work standing high and filled with geraniums and petunias. Behind this is a clump of evergreens, around which the road circles, and farther on a row of Gothic buildings.

You know at a glance that this is neither private dwelling, hotel, educational establishment, factory, nor prison.

"What are those iron bars in the windows for?" asks the stranger.

And some one will answer, "To keep out mosquitoes."

"Nonsense!"

Yes, nonsense: you have hit it exactly. There is a good deal of nonsense in and about Hickory Hall, — harmless nonsense, funny nonsense, ridiculous nonsense, fierce nonsense, murderous nonsense, pompous nonsense. There are nonsensical lawyers here, nonsensical merchants, farmers, clergymen, students, wives, mothers, and daughters, — and even doctors; and yet, mayhap, we shall also find some good sense within these walls, behind those bars, — learning, affection, correct reasoning, the refinements of daily life.

Here is young Gager, the doctor's pupil and assistant in the office. And, by the way, "*the* doctor,"

now to be often spoken of, is the chief of the medical staff of Hickory Hall. Gager has visitors to-day; and one of them, a bright little lady of twenty, he has just taken out for a stroll in the avenue.

"Charley," she asks, "who are those men over there, under the trees? Visitors?"

"Visitors! No, they are patients, out for an airing."

"They don't let that horrid-looking one out, do they, — that one in the light suit?"

"Ha, ha!" laughs Gager. "That one? Why, Georgie, that is one of the attendants! He isn't insane!"

And Miss Georgie is not the only one who has been thus deceived by appearances.

Floating over towards us, across the lawn, and through the trees, come the tones of a soft musical voice, — a man's, but with tenderness in it. Gager invites us to go a little nearer to the party of patients, for "Doctor Ben is going to entertain the company with a song."

There he stands, his hands hanging down, or nervously jerking upwards as he reaches a high note, his vest all unbuttoned, his black necktie streaming down his bosom, his coat half off, and his hair restored to its original color. Listen!

"I dreamt but last night,
Oh, bad luck to my dreaming!
I'd die if I thought
'Twould come truly to pass;

I dreamt, as the tears
Down my pillow were streaming,
That Teddy was courting
Another fair lass.

"Oh, didn't I wake
With a weeping and wailing!
The thought of the grief
Was too deep to conceal.
My mother cried, Norah,
Child, what is your ailing?
But all I could utter
Was, Tiddy O'Nale!"

Ben sang with little art, but with such pathos that the woes of poor Norah seemed to have fallen upon him; and the little knot of patients — nay, the listeners among the evergreens as well — might have shed a tear for him, if Ben had not upset the whole thing by drawing up his left arm with a flourish as he rapidly flung off the closing "Tiddy O'Nale," instantly exclaiming, "Now you get out of this, I tell you!" and scampering off to the remotest corner he could find.

"Who is he?" asks Miss Georgie.

"That is more than I can tell," Gager replies. "He was brought here some time ago by his brother, an Englishman. He is registered as George Hallowell; but the poor fellow says his name is Ben Hartley, and Ben Macrae, and half a dozen other things. We have all fallen into a way of calling him 'Ben,' or, for that matter, 'Doctor,' also; for he has been persuaded by the other patients that he is a doctor."

"Does he ever make any trouble?" she continues.

"Trouble? I only wish they were all as good as Ben. He is as gentle as a lamb. Once in a while he gets a little wild. He imagines that there is a woman who torments him, but the fit is only momentary."

"Here he comes now, Charley. Mercy! take me somewhere, quick!" cries Miss Georgie.

Gager calms her fears; and Ben comes sweeping by, his face aglow, his nostrils expanded, his hands clutching at the coat-collar in an endeavor to pull it over his head. As he passes close to us, he cries, "Don't you do that again, now!" and within twenty paces more he stoops quietly to pick up a pebble or to pluck a blade of grass, the gentle look almost instantly overspreading his face again.

Bang! clatter! smash! What on earth is this?

Only this: that an up-stairs patient is out of temper to-day, and has thrown his washbowl through the window. In twenty minutes the carpenter will have a new sash fitted, and a certain Albany gentleman will order his imaginary cashier to pay damages. Being a man of culture and refinement, it will mortify him to have to wash his hands and face in a tin dish this evening, and he will be downcast, and wonder how he could have behaved so foolishly. Day after to-morrow, as likely as not, he will send another washbowl after the one that went out of window to-day.

And here comes "Merry," one of the most ferocious in talk, one of the most harmless in deed. Observe his peculiar gait. What extraordinarily long, broad,

flat feet! and yet he has the greatest difficulty to balance himself upon them. And how he throws his head back as he walks! It is his disease.

As he comes towards us "Merry" begins to bow, and touch his hat with elaborate ceremony. Shake hands with him, by all means, and hold him hard; otherwise he will topple over, and sit unwillingly upon the ground.

Hear his deep bronchial tones, as he greets you!

"Ah, gentlemen! glad to see you. Smith, did you say? Oh! I see. Yes; new patients, I suppose. Welcome, gentlemen! Jolly good place this for a summer residence, if it wasn't for those infernal — cribs. Say" —

And here "Merry" takes you off by yourself to confide to you that last night the doctor put him into a crib for two hours, and it made his teeth ache. He then resumes his welcome.

"Yes, gentlemen, I am glad to see you here. I was marshal of the city of New York when I was only nine years old; and if the doctor would only let me go down town, and get my teeth fixed, I could do it over again. Just look at my arms! Did you ever see such muscle? Pshah! [Here "Merry" brightens up, pitches his voice on a higher key, and speaks with immense energy.] I could pick up that — that — miserable Wickson, over there, and throw him six feet, if it wasn't for my spine and my limbs!"

"Merry" comes to a stop, not because he has nothing more to say, but because he has espied three or four ladies walking far down the avenue. He

looks at them with a sad smile, shakes his head with solemnity, and takes up his discourse once more, in even deeper voice than before.

"*I too* [with great emphasis] I too had a wife! Ha! did I say *had?* It were better to say *have!* for she is me wife, and yet she is not me wife! Pshah! such a woman as that! [This last with hasty indignation.] I've asked her more than fifty times to come and take me away, and she won't. Ah, well! [sighing] she *was* the wife of me boo-zum, and B. Violet, me daughter, is me own flesh and blood! Oh, what a girl that is!" And "Merry" bursts into laughter.

"You ought to see that girl do sums by the rule of circles," he continues.

"By the rule of what?" you ask.

"The rule of circles. Why, sir, her teacher had a sum one day that she couldn't do herself. It was to find five-elevenths of sixteen. What do you suppose daughty did? Why, she just applied the rule of circles, multiplied by five, and divided by the difference between sixteen and eleven. It was like lightning."

We say good-by to "Merry," and enter one of the buildings. From the upper hall comes a voice, calling out in loud tones, —

"Hey! if you want any money down there, send up a basket. I've got more than a hundred bushels of greenbacks up here, hidden in my shoes and stockings. I'm going to buy New Jersey to-morrow. The rascals are trying to boost me up to a hundred and eight and a half, but I'll circumvent them."

This is from one of the most notable men at Hickory

Hall. When he is in a social mood we call him "*Uncle* Babbage;" if religiously inclined, "*Elder* Babbage;" if disagreeable, "*Old* Babbage."

Let us now go into the billiard-room.

"Billiard-room?" you ask.

Yes, billiard-room. Here is a handsomely dressed gentleman, evidently well-to-do, playing.

"Not insane?" is the question I see in your eye as you glance from him to me. And Mr. Robbins of Boston sees it too, and laughs, as he shakes hands with you, and says, "No, gentlemen, you need not be afraid of me. I'm not one of these insane fellows: I am just a little off my balance now and then, that's all. All owing to a difficulty I have about maintaining the proper relations between the positive and negative currents. Now, to-day has been a very positive day; but to-night the negative will predominate. I can feel it already creeping up my left arm. About eleven o'clock there will be a perfect balance. What do you say to a game of billiards, gentlemen? I made a run of a thousand points here yesterday in ten minutes."

Robbins would talk forever on subjects of his own choosing. Let us choose one for him.

"How about business, Robbins?"

"Business? Well, that's rather a plump question. But I am in a position to answer it now. None of these gentlemen are reporters, are they? Then I'll tell you, — I have purchased Garden City. The judge was pretty hard on me, harder than A. T.; but I've got it, — and to-morrow this establishment, bag, bag-

gage, men, women, and children, go there. We'll all get well then."

You say you would like to go next to the ladies' department? We are sorry, but that is against the rules. You do not roam about at pleasure in the ladies' corridors at the Fifth Avenue or the Brunswick, do you? We must observe the same courtesy here. But come this way, — let us take a look at the flower and vegetable gardens, the orchards, the farm. Did you ever see an estate more neatly kept?

Here is healthful out-door labor for such as are capable of it. Here are diversions for female hands, which touch the flowering plant as tenderly and lovingly as in better days. Here are shady nooks for conversation and reading, seats of rustic shape, overlooking the water, walks through lanes of maple and chestnut. One of these latter passes the end of the south wing. Let us walk that way. Gager and Miss Georgie are sauntering through it, just ahead of us, building castles in the air as likely as not. And, as they go, Miss Georgie shrieks, — simply because a feminine voice calls out, "Oh! how I do love to see little girls! And I should say, now, that is Mr. White of Pittsburgh.

Te-ruddle-dee-buddle,
Te-ruddle-tie-ray" —

The rest of the song dies away in the distance, as an attendant leads noisy "Mrs. Te-ruddle" away from the window. But the song has awakened echoes in other unfortunate hearts; and a hand beckons to us

from another window, while a sorrowful voice cries, "I never stole Charlie Ross. I never did, never, never. And I never took any one's papers. I never did. I never saw Charlie Ross in all my life, never, never, nev" —

Oh! what hidden record of wrongful accusation, of harsh dealing, of bitter shame and grief, of the unloosing of reason's cords, is here! Thank God for the gentle, womanly voice that we hear, saying, —

"There, Mrs. Ransom, never mind it now! Come to my room: we must finish that collar, you know, if we are going to the doctor's party this evening."

No fiction this. Mrs. Ransom did go to the party, and danced, and played a rubber of whist.

Some one is coming across the lawn, and beckoning. It is Robbins, out on parole.

"You were speaking about business, gentlemen. Now, if you really mean business, I can put something where you can find it. That Garden City matter is all bosh. Just come down here into this arbor: I can't bear to have that prying Wickson near me, nor that pompous old marshal of New York.

"Now, see here, I have an invention just perfected. I am going to call it the chevaloscope. You don't know what that means, eh? Look! *cheval*, horse — *scope*, sight, or seer. A little bit mixed, maybe; French and Greek, but so much the better. My invention is founded upon a principle of science, which is neither positive nor negative, but an exact balance. I can feel it in my left wrist: now — a — ah! what was I talking about, gentlemen?"

"Chev"—

"Oh, yes, chevaloscope! No: principle of science, that's the subject. Science, gentlemen, is at the bottom of all our — our — social — h'm! I know perfectly well what I want to say! — anomalies: that's the word. I'll convince you. Lovers of horse-flesh, gentlemen? You are. Well, are — you — aware — of the — fact — that a horse steps, to a hair, just as far as he can see? No more, no less. If, then, a horse could see sixty feet, he would step sixty feet, wouldn't he?"

We assent.

"The chevaloscope is triumphant, gentlemen. My invention consists of a simple rubber hood, with powful lenses for the horse's eyes. I have made my calculations upon a basis of sixty feet, — I may get it up to eighty. Now, divide five thousand two hundred and eighty by sixty: eight — y — eight times exactly. My old Jim takes four steps in a second. That makes a mile in twenty-two seconds. Think of the astonishment of Dexter, the Maid, and all that class of horses, after grinding themselves to powder to get around a two-mile course, finding my old Jim in front of the judge's stand eating oats!"

CHAPTER XIV.

NEW PATIENTS AND OLD.

THE last chapter was not intended to occupy any definite place in the historical sequence of Ben Hollins's life. Its sole purpose was to familiarize the reader somewhat with Ben's surroundings at Hickory Hall.

Coming back now to the more strictly historical or biographical line, we take up the thread of our narrative on the day of Ben's entry into his new life. And while following this thread, occasion will be taken still further to correct an impression, if such an impression has been received, that the dweller at Hickory Hall necessarily and always dwells in the midst of appalling or heart-rending scenes.

Ben's separation from his *infidus Achates* took place without demonstration on either side. An attendant asked him, politely and pleasantly, to come and see his room. "Go, Ben!" whispered Macrae, and the end was accomplished.

If you ask what would have taken place if Ben had shown any unwillingness to go to his quarters, or, in a more general way, if you would like to know what does take place when a new patient shows fight, does not wish to go to his room, or won't go, and would like

to see the man who can make him go, it only needs to be said, that after due consideration, and with a plentiful allowance of time for evaporation, such a patient finds himself sitting in the hall or in his own future apartment, the most astonished man in the establishment. If he looks upon his person for scratches and bruises, he will find none. But the fight is not yet out of him; and the excitable patient manifests his disapproval of the new order of things by stamping up and down, and making a hideous noise. Boots or shoes then melt away from his feet; and in their place are soft, warm slippers. Next he seizes a chair, and bangs upon the floor with all his might, or rattles his bed. Noise is his one refuge. And in a twinkling he finds himself alone in an unfurnished room. Still he has a tongue; and he can sing and scream, if he cannot stamp and pound. He can open the window and call to the small boy passing on the public road, four hundred feet distant, and offer him five thousand dollars to send up a carriage to convey him to the railway.

It is not necessary to make fun of this poor man. He is in misery, and calls for your pity. But close to him are those who are waiting patiently to relieve him. And not very far off is still another agent of alleviation, — the craziest man in the buildings. This is "the Giant," otherwise variously known as the "Duke of Wellington," "Gen. Scott," "Julius Cæsar," "Napoleon Bonaparte." The moment the new patient begins to call to the small boy, "the Giant" smells the battle afar. Up goes his window, loud are his calls for bat-

talions of cavalry, infantry, and artillery. He flourishes his sword, — that is to say, an old newspaper or towel, — and gives military orders with the rapidity of a practised general; and yet "the Giant" never saw a battle or wore a uniform. Back and forth fly the sounds of war, the new patient personating the enemy. The culmination comes in one long yell from the patient, and the cry of, "Murder, murder, murder!" "The Giant" takes it up, and bellows forth such a rending response of "Murder — r — r — r — r!" with a whirr and a rattle at the end, and bangs his casement to with such a crash that the patient is diverted. It occurs to him, that there is some one in this little world worse off than himself, and he quiets himself to study the matter. They could hardly get on at all with some new patients, were it not for "the Giant."

Now is the time for a little soothing. It seldom requires any great amount of artfulness to secure this poor man's confidence. He becomes grateful for attentions, even for an invitation to visit an attendant or a stronger fellow-patient. He loses sight of his terrors in the charity of "helping the doctor," in the room of some sick patient. His pulse comes down to the standard, the eye becomes more gentle, and in an hour he is walking about the ward, making acquaintances, and entertaining them with accounts of his *very peculiar* life and works.

Our Ben began his asylum life without any of these violent demonstrations, or any necessity for coaxing. With a double shuffle and a laugh he accepted the invitation to go to his room; averring that he thought

he had travelled about far enough, and was glad to get home again. It required but little time to set Ben's wardrobe to rights, for it was decidedly insignificant; but Macrae very decently remedied that by sending a trunk full of new clothing a few days after.

Now followed the first visit to the hall, the reading-room, the billiard-room, — in a word, the grand round. The attendant introduced Ben to this patient and that. There was a great shaking of hands, and giving of welcome, on the part of most of the old patients; while a few, a very few, were frightened almost to death by poor, simple, gentle Ben, and shrank away to their rooms or behind any convenient table or door. Some greeted him patronizingly; others examined his clothing, pronouncing it to be of *pretty good* material, and very decently made, but not at all to be compared with theirs.

Robbins took a great fancy to Ben, and pronounced him a perfect gentleman, at sight; and expressed his great delight, that at last there was a patient with whom he could be in perfect sympathy. Ben replied quite cordially, "Oh, yes, to be sure! — ha, ha, yes, yes," which pleased Robbins immensely. And forthwith this doughty inventor of the chevaloscope brought from his room a great mass of towels, sponges, soaps, brushes, flannels, books, bottles of cologne, gold, steel, and quill pens, and what not, to exhibit to Ben as the most remarkable productions, in their several kinds, known to the human race.

Of course we never see such a trait manifested outside of the insane asylum.

The outer door now opens, and there come into the hall three persons, who may be said to be the princes of this little principality. They have pass-keys, and go in and out on parole, as they please. All three are on the downward turn of life: gray is mixing with black and brown on their heads. Ten, sixteen, and twenty years have they been at Hickory Hall. They live in peace, and, for the most part, in happy contentment. Out in the world, life would be one continual misery to them.

Spying Ben, these three magnates, Delorme, Fisher, and Biddle, hold a consultation. The attendant waits for the ending of this ceremony, and then introduces Ben. They neither welcome nor comment upon him in his own hearing, but of the attendant make the following formal inquiries: —

1. Who is he?
2. Where did he come from?
3. By which train?
4. In a carriage, or on foot?
5. Who brought him?
6. Married, or single?
7. Was he noisy?
8. How much of a wardrobe has he?"

Having noted these data mentally, the trio separate: Delorme, as secretary, going to his own room, and jotting down the attendant's answers upon paper.

Presently the dinner-bell rings, and Ben is regaled with as good eating as he requires. The most important feature of the occasion is the studious observation, of which Ben is the unconscious object. The

magnates are taking notes, and the glances they confer upon one another are most significant.

But these three say not a word to each other concerning Ben all the afternoon. Each one goes his several way, — each one cogitating. At evening a conclave is held in Delorme's room. Fisher, as the elder, diagnoses Ben's case, with astonishing fulness and perspicacity. Surreptitiously he has felt Ben's pulse, and looked at his tongue, taken his height and girth, observed his gait and breathing. He is a wise man, this Fisher, and a good man it should be said. He has built railroads in his day. He has been at the head of some gigantic engineering operations whose results you, Mr. Mens-sana-in-corpore-sano, admire greatly. He has been an adept with all known chemicals and minerals. He is still full of lore, and can talk a whole college down on professional subjects.

Solemnly the trio look over Delorme's notes: Fisher writing first, at the head of the page, "*Notitiæ ad ægrotum novum.*"

A free discussion now ensues, any disagreements being invariably settled by some wise dictum from Fisher; and at the end this leader asks, "Have you any thing further to say, gentlemen?"

"Nothing."

"Then I will offer my opinion. I'll give that man just one week on this hall. After that, good-by. These quiet ones always end up with a ruction. I'm sorry for him; but there's nothing for it but the crib, the muffs, and the blind-room."

More than five hundred times has Fisher pronounced

these same words after the same ceremonial, and in the cases of an equal number of new patients. And just as many times has Delorme followed them up with the question, —

"What do you think is the matter with him, Fisher?"

And every time Fisher has replied, —

"Mania, — undeveloped mania. I can see it in his eye, on his tongue, in the cut of his coat."

And every time Biddle has piped in, "It's g'my opingiong that he's g'pretty near n'gen'ral p'resis too."

It is impossible to put the ludicrousness of this scene into print; and it becomes especially lawful and proper to laugh at it, when we reflect that the dire prophecies of the magnates come true only in one case in hundreds; and most laughable of all when the knowledge is ours that Ben Hollins never saw a crib, a muff, or a blind-room, never was stricken with mania, never had a symptom of paresis or paralysis, and is living to-day in Comfort Lodge, well and happy.

A night of restful sleep brought Ben to an awaking which interested the medical staff and the intelligent attendants. Experienced as they were, the trait of implicit obedience in Ben was discovered at once. He did not get up until he was told to; he did not dress, come out of his room, or heed the breakfast-bell, until he was bidden. Knowledge of this trait became of great service ere long.

After breakfast at Hickory Hall comes the morning outing for the milder and convalescent patients. Ben joins the group on the lawn in some bewilderment.

Presently "Merry" walks up to him, spreading his feet widely, and in his deepest voice asks, "Did you hear me yell last night?"

Says Ben, "I'm sure I don't exactly recollect just now."

"You bet, I just *hollered!* That doctor wouldn't let me go to sleep, poured a quart of medicine down my throat, rubbed my spine with something that smarted like kerosene-oil and red pepper. Of course I made a noise! and *I've got a voice*, now, if I am a sick man!" And "Merry" laughed and tittered at the thought of it.

"Pshah!" he continued. "You ought to have heard me when I took my slipper, and slapped on the window-slats! — rat, tat, rat, tat, tat! rat, tat, rat, tat, tat! And, when I got tired of that, I turned over, and rapped on the floor. I'll bet you they heard me ten miles off! Pshah! when I was mayor of Albany, — I was only eight years old, — I made a speech on the opening of the Atlantic cable, and a 'Troy Times' reporter took down my remarks *verbatim* while he was attending a funeral up at Cohoes."

From a window in the north wing come strains which draw Ben away from "Merry." It is the well-known air, "Il balen del sorriso," and it is "the Giant" who is singing in a grand baritone. Ben listens, standing stock-still, entranced. He is as a man upon whom some gentle flood of memory is beginning to pour; and what shall be the end of it? Shall "the Giant," perhaps, touch the very chord which Betty Hartley longed to sound, and failed? Shall the

"Ah! l'amor, l'amore ond' ardo
Le favelli in mio favore,
Sperda il sole d'un suo sguardo
La tempesta del mio cor!"

warm up the dead love in Ben's chilled heart? Shall he come again to think of Betty as of

"The loved for whom my heart is burning
With a love beyond control"?

Shall he break forth here in Hickory Hall some day, and sing, —

"She alone, that love returning,
Can quell the tempest of my soul"?

These questions were for the future to answer, but Dr. Peterson took note of the effect of the song upon Ben at once.

The day passes, and early evening finds Ben one of a company of patients and attendants in the billiard-room. Some are playing, with varying degrees of skill, with much good-humor and zest. These are not trying to make "a run of a thousand points in ten minutes:" it is genuine playing. All the *finesse* of the game — the cushion-shots, the draws, the parloring — they understand as well as men outside. Look at Barclay, now, — how he manœuvres those balls in the corner! What a run he will get out of them! Acuteness, reflection, manual delicacy in the avoidance of a "freeze," are parts of Barclay's training.

At tables in other parts of the room are groups playing checkers, backgammon, euchre, and even chess, —

not crazy games of mere tossing men and cards about, but genuine play, and some of it uncommonly skilful play.

"Here comes the new one," says some older patient. "Ask him to play checkers, Merry."

"Oh, yes! certainly," says Ben.

A smile goes from face to face as the electric spark from lamp to lamp. The truth is, the patients look upon Ben as foolish: they are disposed to class him among idiots.

But he takes the proffered chair, and sets the blacks. "Merry" cannot possibly play with any but the whites.

"Move first," says "Merry," out of pity for the "poor fellow."

Ben moves; "Merry" moves; Ben follows up; they gather their forces in serried array; "Merry" gets first blood; Ben sweeps off one, two, three; "Merry" looks surprised, but renews the attack. Back and forth they surge, the group of patients gathering round in silence. "Merry" bluffs his opponent with a little of that braggadocio which might be allowed to a man who was marshal of the city of New York at the age of nine; but Ben is deaf to it. "Jumping" is uppermost in his thoughts; and he jumps finally into the king-row, — then off go the whites, pell-mell. Another black monarch, — and another! and, as "Merry's" last man is cornered, Ben clears the room at two bounds, puts on his hat, and walks rapidly to the hall-door as one who has business to do.

The games are over, the players tired of them.

Now comes a ripple of conversation, and what do we hear? Talk about cities far away, of European travel, of art-galleries, of politics, of business, of famous singers and painters, and preachers and kings, — sayings as rational as you would hear in any drawing-room or club.

And down at the farther end of the hall is Fisher. He has opened a cabinet, and is arranging upon its shelves a score of new mineral specimens, every one of which he will label with its name in science. And Ben is helping him. How? Fisher, too, has discovered the obedience upon which hinges so much of Ben's present character, and is making good use of it. He is delighted with Ben's readiness at spelling the hard names he gives him to write upon the small cards, and Ben is appointed and confirmed assistant mineralogist at Hickory Hall.

The groups begin to break up at eight o'clock; and now scattered about the hall are men reading, — one a New-York daily, another a Boston paper, or one of Philadelphia, Baltimore, Chicago, Montreal. There are illustrated papers also, and a dozen books from the library.

Occasionally Ben will take up a paper or book. It is doubtful, however, whether he reads. He dwells in a region of abstraction for the most part. He is evidently thinking, thinking always. He holds imaginary conversations with unseen beings. He has fitful periods of purpose, just as he had at home, — of purpose which evaporates at the outset of accomplishment.

For one thing, Ephraim Hollins, and Ben's mother, and Betty Hartley, could they but have seen him in these days, would have been thankful, — that their Ben was content and happy, and greatly loved.

CHAPTER XV.

BETHLEHEM — BEDLAM.

THE history of the enlargement of human knowledge is much the same, in whatever line of thought we look at it. In astronomy, in music, in food products, in mechanical forces, we witness a development, for which this century, in particular, is notable. How is it in medical science? Precisely the same. Time was when the sick, with whatever disease, were carried to some secluded spot and left to recover or die, as unassisted Nature might determine. There are nations still which know no better.

With increased intelligence, however, the wondrous provisions of Nature for the cure of the sick are discovered. A *materia medica* of one or two herbs or roots is enlarged by hundreds; minerals are experimented upon, and added to the growing list of remedies. A profession becomes necessary, and learns to arm itself with lancet and knife, discovers the secrets of the ligature and bandage, builds hospitals, trains nurses, — in a word, brings forth to the world a full-fledged science.

Now, why this science, for hundreds and hundreds of years, should concern itself solely with the care of men's livers and hearts and spleen and limbs, and

stand utterly powerless the moment the brain is touched, let them explain who can. Thank God, medical art is no longer satisfied with half-knowledge. It is determined to look into this affair of brain-disturbance. And its first formula is thus written, —

Axiom. — *Insanity is sickness.*

Hypothesis. — If insanity is sickness, it can be cured.

Problem. — How? By what means?

There is a key to every problem. This one can be solved, — and must. In fact, every particular case of insanity, or each class of cases, is an independent problem, and the key exists. Will it ever be found?

It is not too much to say, that faithful students have solved some of the problems already: towards others, they are progressing, inch by inch. Patience! The day and the hour will come.

Dr. Peterson, of Hickory Hall, is a student. He recognizes, in the suspension or partial suspension of the mental faculties, in mental distortion or weakness, a grand scope for research. A new patient is to him a new study. He admits, being utterly without quackery, that the case may baffle him, that he cannot handle it as a mason would set a stone. *May* baffle him! there are infinite chances that it *will* laugh all his knowledge to scorn. But, patience, good people! It will not always be thus. A few generations of students, a stronger concentration of the light which is pouring in upon the world, and the new science will come forth in full panoply. It has taken six thousand years to bring Dr. Peterson to the birth. He ought to do good work for Mother Earth and her other children.

But even body-treatment is not yet perfected. It is still possible for a "noted" physician to declare that a kidney trouble is heart disease, and not to discover his mistake until the post-mortem. Indeed, it is only a few years ago that D'Alembert told us of one of the leading medical lights of France, who retired after a practice of thirty years, giving as his reason for so doing, that he was "weary of guessing." Good physicians, honest ones, men who are determined to make medicine a science and not a bugaboo, will go on guessing, conjecturing, experimenting, investigating, — and we know with what grand results. And if body-treatment, with its thousands of years of study, is thus imperfect, it would be folly to expect mind-treatment to be perfected in only two hundred, — it would be within bounds to say even fifty.

For let us compare what now is with what has been. Not many years ago, no one cared to know whether such a man as Ben Hollins had any semblance of humanity, except the bodily, left in him. The divine spark was considered to be totally extinguished. Even the Reformation, much vaunted for its grand achievements, somehow failed to touch this large class of Christ's sheep effectively. True, it may be said in one sense to have inaugurated, or to have paved the way for, the steps which have since been taken in mental science. But of itself, it did nothing but in a moment of pity drive the monks out of the priory of St. Mary of Bethlem, and convert the premises into an asylum. Where were the physicians, and where the intelligent keepers? Not yet known. On the

contrary, pity was satisfied when it had placed over the unhappy inmates of St. Mary's as barbarous a set of men as were ever bred in Rome, or for that matter in Africa or in the Society Islands. The poor creatures confined there were lashed and beaten, starved and murdered. The keepers were allowed, by special enactment, to exhibit the "crazy folk" to a gaping public. In one year, it is recorded, eight thousand people came to see this spectacle, to look upon men and women literally caged, some snarling and biting, some shrinking in half-conscious fear and shame into darkest corners. All this (and much more that cannot be written) at a charge, set by the law, of one penny a head.

From the mouths of these eight thousand came a new word, — "Bedlam," — formed out of a barbarous twisting of that name of no other than tender memories, Bethlem, Bethlehem; for water out of whose well David longed; the town where Ruth the Moabitess found sweet welcome, the town where Jesus was born. Bethlehem, — house of bread! Bedlam, — house of starvation and grief!

"Bedlam" seems to have been, for many years, the model upon which all English institutions for the insane were built and conducted. In them thousands were consigned to darkness and filth, maltreated and murdered on slightest provocation. Not an effort seems to have been made for their *cure*. Their *keep* was the sole consideration. And England has written of herself, that, in the brief space of eighty years, no less than forty-five thousand insane people were hung,

shot, drowned, or otherwise violently disposed of, within her borders. Such is not the England of to-day.

The ignorance and superstitions of that former England came over the ocean to this new land, as well as many good and noble ideas. Bedlam was set up here also, at an early period. The law took upon itself the whole charge of the insane. If harmless, the law allowed the unfortunate to roam about in the character of "a fool;" but if he broke a dish, or mischievously unbuckled the harness of a standing horse, much more if he flung stones or shook a stick at teasing children, or struck an exasperating man, the law put forth its long arms, and sent him to Bedlam. And where was that? In the cellar, the garret, of the poorhouse or the jail. Twelve good men and true, that is to say, *not insane*, gathered together with an array of big-wigs and little-wigs, and a charge was framed against the offender, — the charge that he was insane. *Pro forma*, he was tried, convicted, sentenced, like a criminal, and duly incarcerated among criminals, only to be treated with ten times as much rigor as the meanest of thieves or the most villainous of murderers.

Whence was the logic of all this? You will find it based upon the fears and the cupidity of the people. It was to be feared, the law claimed, and the people who made the law, that this man might commit crimes, — *ergo*, it would be better to put him away *before* the crimes were committed. Why not try the working of such a principle in the slums of all our cities? And, again, there is no denying that, in early days, thrift and

economy were among the loftiest cardinal virtues in this land. Give a man an insane son or daughter, one who could not dig and delve, and bring in something for the household treasury, and he would go to the authorities, perhaps with tears in his eyes, and foist off the encumbrance upon the public expense.

But the shocks borne by a more enlightened parental, marital, and filial affection have awakened us somewhat to the study of this subject. We are beginning to see that our own flesh and blood, sick with mental trouble, are objects of pity and affection, as much as when stricken with physical disease.

There is still enough to be remedied, however, in our method of caring for these unfortunates. Let us take a look at the county poorhouse for instance. Here is a veritable lordling who meets us at the door, and in manner, if not in word, resents our intrusion. Who is he? Some small political henchman, almost sure to be one of the meanest of his class. He has done an amount of most unclean work for "the party," and must be rewarded with a place. The poorhouse is thought to be a fitting niche for this man, and he is installed without pomp or ceremony. He surveys his field with an eye to the profits. For the aged he cares little enough, for the sick no more, — the insane are his especial aversion. These he endeavors to keep out of sight; out of his own sight, mind you, quite as much as of other people's. Without exercise, air, proper food, or any medical care worth speaking of, they are shut up, tied, nay, chained. What wonder that they *become* madmen?

And while the process of converting them into maniacs is going on, this heartless administrator of what is intended to be a public charity actually spends occasional moments of his valuable time in *reasoning* with the unfortunate lunatic. He threatens generally, coaxes rarely. A cry of distress is followed by new punishment, a protest by abuse or a blow. Such things are a blot upon any social system, a shame to any people.

But this world is waking to what the Lord Christ sought to teach. Did not he give the grandest impetus to medical art? Did he not point out that blindness and deafness might be cured? the speechless tongue, the paralyzed limb, be restored? the very dead be raised to life again? And yet men read of his mighty works, and speak of them only as *miracles*. This is drivelling superstition and weakness. Hear his majestic words! "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do."

Your average ecclesiastic, even, disposes of this text, and of the glorious heritage which it announces, in quite a remarkable fashion. He takes down a certain history of the Church, and reads therein of the death of Ignatius and some of his contemporaries, and apparently derives solid comfort from this closing sentence, "About this time miracles ceased in the Church." Yes, they did cease, because the condition upon which they were given to men ceased. Men ceased to believe in Christ, and began to put faith in wooden images and pictures of him. Then came

a furious battle against these, with much pretentiously pious iconoclasm, and a substitution of mental images. The real Christ was just as much forgotten as before, and this man's Christ and that man's Christ substituted. Are the preachers telling us to-day exactly and precisely the words of Jesus of Nazareth? Not at all; but they are hurling firstlies and secondlies at us, clinched with the unconvincing logic of "*I* believe this," and "It is *my* opinion that." And these generations of image-worshippers, whether wooden or mental, have been swallowed up in the ardor of Pope-service and Reformer-service, with very little substantial difference between them when you come to sift the matter; and trooping in among them, a free-lance in the fight, comes the sceptic, cutting and slashing right and left, knocking over Cavalier and Roundhead indiscriminately. Has he any quarrel against the real Christ? None whatever. His ire is really against the false ones, — the images; and it makes little difference to him whether they be visible or invisible.

No wonder, then, that miracles ceased. But what is this that is coming to the world? Has faith begun to revive? Certainly the miracles are coming round again. The sick are better cared for, the insane are no longer stoned to death by an ignorant, brutal mob, who the next hour will be counting beads, or piously repeating the Book of Leviticus backwards. To the clergy it may be left to tell whether "to the poor the gospel is preached."

It is not intended here to set up any barrier of comparison between the two charitable professions. It is

always a pity that these two professions cannot more intimately go hand in hand. The time is coming when they will. Short-sighted and opinionated sceptics in one, and raving anti-materialists in the other, will be swept out of sight and hearing, some day. Meantime there is much to be done in the particular field which we are surveying, — a public sentiment to be built up which shall insist upon the final retirement of the barbarism which has hung upon our skirts too long, a private intelligence to be communicated which shall make each individual man and woman look upon insanity in a clearer light.

And here, as well as anywhere else, a certain phase of insanity may be touched upon. Boileau hit upon it in a satirical strain, which is not so very far from doctrinal truth: —

"Tous les hommes sont fous,
Et, malgré tous les soins,
Ne different entre eux
Que du plus ou des moins."

(Having no translation at hand, the writer begs pardon of the whole fraternity of poets for the following:)

All men, no doubt, are mad,
Though some take pains to hide it.
The exposure, true, is sad,
But we may as well abide it:
The truth is infinitely sadder, —
We all are mad, and some are madder.

There is a grain of truth in Boileau's satire. What mean these accusations which are heard in all quar-

ters, — men charging one another with want of reason? Look carefully, my splendid man, my elegant woman, straining every nerve, pulling hard upon every muscle, daring sickness and death!

There are questions of positively moral import for you to consider in this connection. Look at the names of a few of them, and consider!

Overwork, whether mental or physical.

Undue absorption in one particular pursuit.

The use of alcohol and opium.

Physical habits of degeneracy, of whatever sort.

Do not flinch. If you are sane, face these questions.

One further reflection. There is "an old saw" — "Once insane, always insane" — which may as well be laid aside, as a rusty, toothless affair. It is but another relic of the old barbarism. It has caused the shedding of oceans of tears. We do not mean that every case will or can be cured. No one dares, as yet, to say that. The miracle-time has not fully come yet. There are some who go down into the darkest part of this "valley of the shadow of death," never to emerge till Jesus of Nazareth shall come and lead them to the new light of God's great day. For these summon all your patience and pity, and wait for the hour of "restitution of all things." So far as this world is concerned, death is the only known release.

But for the many keep a warm place at your fireside and in your hearts. Coldness and dread, contempt and neglect, have sent many a man back again to mental agony. Be like "the Giant's" noble wife.

For here it may be disclosed to you that "the Giant" has ceased his military operations. His campaign is over: he has gone home. And how do you think he found matters there? His slippers on the fender, the table set for supper, and his old favorite dishes steaming for him, his wife in the dress he loved best to see her in, his dog ready to bounce upon him, the evening paper laid ready to his hand. You would have supposed "the Giant" had but returned from a journey.

CHAPTER XVI.

DOCTOR BEN.

TO illustrate the preceding chapter, and to complete our comparison of what has been with what is, in the treatment of the insane, we return to Ben Hollins and Hickory Hall.

Not so many years ago there would have been no Hickory Hall for Ben to go to. No one would have thought of finding a key to his troubles, or of there being any possible remedy for his disorder. The loving ones at Elmswoods would have cared for him just as tenderly, no doubt; beyond that, all they would or could have done would be to sit helplessly by him, waiting, perhaps, for some accident of nature. Not even would there have been any Pool of Siloam, upon whose banks to place Ben for a weary waiting for the moving of the waters.

But at Hickory Hall there were men of intelligence, with note-books in their pockets, walking with Ben, sitting with him in-doors and out-of-doors, talking with him, noting slightest changes in him, observing his habits of speech, of action, of *physique*. Thank thee, Gaul, for more words than one! Moreover, these note-books passed into the doctor's hands, their contents to be verified or rejected by his larger expe-

rience and knowledge. It was an almost shapeless mass of metal upon which Ben's custodians began to work; but one day Dr. Peterson made a definite mark upon the mass; another day, another mark; and yet another and another, until the lines he had drawn upon its surface indicated that a discovery was not far off. Line one was as if the letter *M* had been drawn upon the metal. What next? An *e*, an *m*, an *o*, an *r*, — and Dr. Peterson quietly said to himself, "*Memory!* Yes, this man has the beginnings of memory. Through that channel he must be led back to sanity."

Dr. Peterson proceeded to compose a new catechism, designed for Ben's sole instruction. But he was entirely in the dark. He supposed Ben to be a *bona fide* Englishman, and puzzled the poor fellow with a hundred and one questions concerning London, and Durham, and Bristol, and Manchester; Ben passing a very poor examination, therefore, in the new catechism. The doctor was also in the dark as to Ben's family and connections; and the little surprises he laid for his patient, in order to reach the thin little speck of thread whereby to get at this machinery of memory, went for nought. Dr. Peterson finally went to thinking in another direction, saying to one of his coadjutors, "Laidlaw, this Ben is no Englishman. He is a Canadian. There is some hocus-pocus in this."

Gager thereupon was directed to write letters to various banks whose checks had come to Hickory Hall, to the post-office authorities at Toronto, and even to "Ephraim Hollins and Son, Millington, Ont.,"

one of their drafts having actually been tendered in payment of Ben's charges. But from all the same reply came: "No knowledge of Mr. E. P. Hallowell." "Ephraim Hollins and Son" added that "in all probability their check had passed into Mr. Hallowell's hand in some business process." How Mr. Hollins would have leaped if he had seen that letter! But he did not see it. It came, in due course of business, into Thomas Macrae's hands, — how, will be seen in a subsequent chapter of this narrative; and Macrae smiled as he calmly dictated a reply, which one of the bookkeepers at the office wrote.

Dr. Peterson is not a man to be baffled by a few obstacles. In lieu of information from others, he determined to procure what he could from Ben himself. He gathered up the names of "Ben, Macrae, Hartley, Thomas, Betty," and the words, "mills, car, fisherman, you get out of this," and innumerable others. It was a laborious way to go to work, — something as if a man should undertake to build a house with his own hands, and should have to go to the quarry for each particular stone; but the edifice assumed proportions in time.

During the second autumn and winter of Ben's stay at Hickory Hall, his happy disposition left him for a time, and he became very cross, sometimes ugly. People of the imagination plagued him. His tormentress assumed great sway over him, and disturbed his serenest moments. Sometimes even in the night Ben could be heard crying out, "Now, don't you do that again, I tell you!" and flying down the hall.

Or, if the like occurred in the daytime, some one would call out, "Look out for Ben!" and before "Merry" could get his feet shaped for retreat, bang would come Ben's pillow, and down would go the marshal of the city of New York. Generally it ended in a laugh all around, "Merry" no less pleased than the rest.

Ben had great jousts, also, with the beds, bureaus, and doors. In his anger, he would shake their wits out almost. He rasped his own knuckles until they bled.

And Dr. Peterson stood by and smiled (the heartless man), and, turning to an attendant, gave directions which would have sounded very oddly in a sick-room. Dr. Peterson seemed to glory in making Ben more and more active. He even laughed when Ben's water-pitcher went where all good pitchers go (in the insane-asylum): he expressed satisfaction even in a heap of kindling-wood and splinters found in Ben's room one morning, manufactured by the patient out of two respectable chairs.

The three magnates, in a body, went over to the office more than once during this period, to suggest "the crib, or at least the muffs;" but Dr. Peterson only said, "You may be right, gentlemen — and, by the way, Fisher, much obliged to you for those fine mushrooms you sent in yesterday."

To this period of activity, however, succeeded one of semi-stupefaction. It looked hard for Ben, for a month or two.

But, lo! with returning spring, Ben woke up again.

He came out in new colors. About this time John Wickson — "that miserable Wickson" — had returned to Hickory Hall, after one of his periodical absences; and his appearance on the lawn was the signal for something of an excitement. "Merry," with an exclamation of disgust, vexation, or despair, picked up his camp-chair, newspapers, books, spectacles, cane, and shoes, and retreated. The other patients civilly shook hands with Wickson, and prepared for a siege of endless talk, innumerable questions, and a recitation of the histories of Rome, Greece, Assyria, Egypt, and the Revolutionary War.

For some time Ben stood listening, and looking abstractedly into Wickson's face, — listening and looking, that is, to all appearance: in reality, he was looking into another world, and listening to inaudible voices.

One of the patients, however, suddenly called out, "Well, Ben, what sort of man is he?"

Ben answered, "Ha, ha! Well, I couldn't say, — exactly, — at least, not without an examination." A flash of memory, this; not an important one, but bearing yet some relation to the greater work that was going on in Ben.

"Examine him then, Ben!" was the cry from all sides. In an instant Ben was behind Wickson, and his fingers were moving about the patient's head. Wickson flinched just once, then took in the humor of the proceeding, and submitted. And now rolled off from Ben's lips a phrenological rigmarole, in as scientific shape as any professor could have invented.

"Secretiveness — small; caution — small; benevolence — large; self-esteem — tremendous; approbation — large; veneration — doubtful; conscientiousness — hardly perceptible; locality — good; tune — large, very large, ha, ha! quite a musical gentleman, I should say; comparison — small; combativeness — large; destructiveness — very large."

After a fashion of his own, Ben had made a tolerable selection from the thirty-three "bumps;" and now in turn every patient on the lawn had a fancy for a phrenological examination. Ben was in demand, and went through his prescribed labors in a dignified way, every examination being in much the same terms, and in the main complimentary, as a genuine phrenological statement should be.

The patients took the cue from this affair; and poor little Schmidt, once a Broad-street man of great financial operations, now an unhappy victim of melancholia, took Ben aside to consult him upon his many ailments. Robbins claimed next attention, then another and another; and that day Ben graduated in medicine, took out his diploma, and went into a large if not lucrative practice.

His own mind — this word may be used advisedly — absorbed the notion of his fellow-patients, and he assumed the *rôle* which has given a title to this book. And from this time on, if Ben had ever been in danger of forgetting his new office, the patients would have restored him to his medical position. For not an evening was allowed to pass without a summons at least from Schmidt and Robbins. Until, at last, Ben

fell into a regular habit of making a round of medical calls. With hat and gloves on, and a cane under his arm, Ben would knock at Schmidt's door.

"How are you to-night, sir?" Ben would ask, in that doctor's voice which we have all heard with gladness or dread.

"Oh! I am very meeserabble," was the invariable reply. "I am more meeserabble efery day. I am eaten alife, doctor, wit my sorrows. I shall nefare, nefare see my wife again? Do you think I shall efare see my wife again? Do you think I shall efare go home, doctor?"

"Oh! well — go home?" Ben would ask, poor Schmidt's tears softening his heart, — "go home? Why, yes, I dare say you'll go home again, — let me see, now! — well, just as soon as the street-lamps are lighted, now. Will that do?"

Then would come a long pause. These two would stand looking at each other; Schmidt, a foot shorter than Ben, gazing up at him over his eye-glasses, and Ben dangling his hands in bewildered helplessness. It was a scene to make a stone weep.

And, in the midst of your tears, Ben would whirl about, and take Schmidt's pulse, look at his tongue, ask him a few questions, so like your family physician, with the same air, the same cautious, soothing, authoritative tone, and, patting Schmidt on the shoulder, exclaim, —

"A little feverish, I should say, to-night. A cooling draught will set you all right. Suppose you try now a small dose, — say two gallons of whiskey, and four

ounces of quinine. Take it to-morrow morning before breakfast."

Next door Ben would find Delorme, one of the magnates, laid up with a sprained ankle. A man of sixty, who climbs trees, may expect such accidents. Ben has assisted the attendants to dress this ankle so many times that he is fairly acquainted with the case, and on this official visit he is prepared to administer to Delorme pretty vigorously. "I want you to try next," he says, "a plaster of goose-oil and tar,—say fourteen or fifteen pounds,—tie it around your back, you know ; and after that, a tonic, I should think about two gallons of whiskey and four ounces of quinine,—to be taken just before breakfast. Good night."

"Hold on, doctor," Delorme said one evening. "Are you very busy now?"

"Very, very. Great many sick just now,—regular epidemic."

"What is it?"

"Well—we call it the diamorphous hypogene, you know. Ha, ha! Latin and Greek! To tell you the truth," Ben whispers, "we used to call it colic, in—ah! what's the name of that place, now?"

Speak it, Ben, speak it! One syllable of it! It is the clew to your past history, the very word of all forgotten words which is most desired at the office.

Memory pulls and pushes, but the wheels of her chariot will not move out of the deep rut into which they are fallen. They can be made to move, however, Dr. Peterson says ; and, if ingenuity can accomplish it,

they will stand again on level ground, whole and round and workable.

During the spring-time Dr. Peterson was studying two especial cases with intense care, — Ben's and the "Giant's." Both are putting forth new energies. Ben's are gentle manifestations, for the most part. But the "Giant" is tearing every thing to pieces. When he mounts the wall, and brandishes his newspaper threateningly at Gager, calling, — fairly yelling at him, — "It was you who shot Lady Jane Grey in the leg, — I saw you, — you're a spy, sir;" or when he interrupts Wickson's melodious warbling of "Wash all my guilty stains away," at four o'clock in the morning, with the assurance that if he did not immediately "shut up," he would come over and wash out his "*countless* guilty stains" in his own blood, — "your *blood*, sir, do you hear?" the "Giant's" energy was unmistakable, and the whole north wing was painfully aware of it.

The paramount facts were, that Ben was developing, day by day, in accord with his own natural character, while the "Giant" had *assumed* a character: in real sane life, he was just as gentle a man as Ben Hollins.

And yet Dr. Peterson said, "Both these men are going to get well." What depths must be sounded, then, if men of the same natural characteristics are to be treated differently! Give the doctors time, therefore, good people! They are solving a multitude of problems. The equations are long ones: four, five, twenty unknown quantities are in them.

"Home" was a word which came into frequent

use, in the interviews of physicians and attendants with Ben and the "Giant," at this time. The one flew into illogical frenzy at the word. Faintest recollections of home-life mingled with images of ancient and modern warriors. "Home!" he would cry. "Yes, home! My name is Farragut — lash me to the mast — load those howitzers to the muzzle, and give it to em. Now — bang! — there she goes, right into Canal Street. Where's Gen. Hubby? Send him here to black my boots instantly. I'm going home!"

The other smiled at the word, stirred to some faint impression and feeling, which yet he had no power to grasp and mould into a distinct idea. But the very smile was something, in Dr. Peterson's mind. Behind it, he knew, lay a wide realm of fact and reason.

Woe to you, Thomas Macrae, if Ben Hollins should some day find that realm all open and clear! If the remembrance of father and mother, and bride, of Comfort Lodge, and even of that night journey, and the refuge at Si Kimber's, shall come to him all fresh and untrammelled! You were not dealing with a dead man, Thomas Macrae, but with an insane man. "Dead men tell no tales," it is said. Insane men *remember.*

CHAPTER XVII.

CARNEY DUGAN.

WE must needs take a flight now to the north; for other characters than Ben and his new-found companions demand some notice at our hands.

And, first of all, what had become of that blundering creature with whose fortunes Macrae's had become so unhappily involved?

Carney's uneventful journey to Quebec ended in her standing on the wharf at the early hour of half-past six in the morning of Friday, Sept. 14. Whither should she go? In which one of all these houses, great and small, should she look for shelter?

Thomas Macrae's command that she should avoid her old acquaintance came vaguely to her mind; and Carney made short work of reconciling disobedience to that injunction with the ardent desire which had been growing in her all through her journey, to see Patsy Doniphan, the friend of her younger days.

"I'll find the pos'offy steps as well from Doniphan's as from elsewhere," she thought.

So all day long the half-bewildered woman wandered through the streets. Here and there she made inquiry, fruitless for the most part; and the chilling premonitions of night were gathering rapidly around her before

she received any satisfaction from the replies made to her questions by impatient or indifferent wayfarers. At length, however, she wandered into St. Roch, and men began to tell her more confidently of Patsy Doniphan's whereabouts. There were plenty now, who knew at least where "T'ree Pistol" Street was, and who directed Carney's footsteps thither.

But Carney found herself in a new world. A straggling byway of thirty years ago had become a crowded row of buildings. One only familiar object came within Carney's view, — an old stone shop on the corner of Trois Pistoles and Secours. And where was Patsy Doniphan's house, which used to stand next?

Opportunely a *habitan* came that way; and Carney laid hold of him boldly, saying, "Av ye plaize, sir, is Patsy Doniphan alive? An' does he live near by?"

The *habitan* lifted both hands, as if these were the most surprising questions he had ever listened to, and in a shrieking, quavering voice, cried out, —

"Passtee Doanphan! Iss Passtee Doanphan avif? L'vieux bo' Passtee?"

"What-and-iver is dhe man sayin' an' doin'?" muttered Carney.

M. Papatou loved a bit of gossip, and a bit of drink, better than any thing else in this world; and he scented here a rare opportunity. Taking Carney's hand, therefore, without ceremony, he dragged her along, pointing and gesticulating violently with his free hand, and pouring forth a volley of words.

"Come! Passtee Doanphan lif! Pastee ver' olt!

Bo' man, Passtee Doanphan! Coam wis moi, voyez! Ici Passtee 'ouse, v'la!"

Saying which, M. Papatou ushered Carney into the commodious public room of Doniphan's establishment. A crowd of Irish and provincial French were gathered here, filling all the space except one wide clearing, in the midst of which, seated in a large easy-chair which no one else ever dared to occupy, was the proprietor himself.

With utter lack of that decorum which the great Mr. Doniphan expected of all visitors, M. Papatou drew Carney to the foot of the throne, calling aloud as he approached, "Hi! Passtee Doanphan! v'la ta mère, ta tante! I haf her deescofer pa' d'hors!" Then lowering his voice almost to a whisper, he added, "Prappa she like a somesing — somesing to dhrrink! Hi! me too? Iss colt!"

"Misther Poppytoes!" said Doniphan, "would you do me the favor to explain dhis most extr'or'nery perceeding? If it's a joke, it's a very poor one!"

"Ah! Passtee, now, — bo' Passtee, voyez" —

To what extent the rising storm might have risen we shall never know; for Carney had not come to Doniphan's to play a silent part, and at this point addressed royalty after the following fashion: —

"An' is dhis you, Misther Doniphan? I'd niver expec' the han' o' age to lay so light on you! It's dhe look uv dhe lad of twinty dhat lingers in yure face!"

Old Doniphan was duly impressed with this compliment, and endeavored to rise. His rheumatic limbs,

however, straightened but slowly; and, half upright, half bent over, — looking something like a comma, — he replied to Carney, —

"Dhere's something in dhe toans uv yure v'ice, madam, dhat strikes famillerly on me hear'n, but I'm entirely astray wid dhe face."

"An' what's dhe matther wid me face?" asked Carney in indignation.

"Well," replied Doniphan, as if to give her back as good as she sent, "I can't say as it's a purty one, mem, agin me conscience and me own eyesight too."

A wailing cry broke upon the ears of the assemblage, attracting the attention of all. "Oh-h-h! to be spoke to dhat away be ole frinds! O Pat Doniphan! it's a heart dhat beat warm an' thrue for you an' yours dhat you've broke dhis day! An' times was whin you'd 'a' fought all Anthrim, if anny other man had said dhe like o' dhat!"

Drawing himself up a trifle nearer to the perpendicular, Doniphan gazed at Carney earnestly. In a more respectful tone he addressed her at last, but with an overwhelming care not to lose one jot of his own dignity.

"Plaize to *ix*-cuse me imponderousness, mem," he said; "but re'ly, dhe illusions you make to dhe toimes an' places dhat's past and gone is not very prespicuous. If I iver had dhe felicity uv knowin' you in *dhim* times, why don't ye promul*gate* it, an' be done wid it?"

Carney's bony index-finger was in the air in an instant; and it bent this way and crooked that way,

as Carney asked, with ludicrous solemnity, "Was it you, Pat Doniphan, dhat fought wid Con Cormick wanc't for a lass in Arboe?"

The old man gave an extra tug at his obstinate knees in order to lift his face more nearly to a level with Carney's. He peered into the mass of shrivelled skin and dry wrinkles, then, with a wild "Hurroo!" flung dignity to the winds, and his arms around Carney's neck.

"It's Carney Roak that was! it's Carney Roak!" he cried. "Is it you, Carney? More be token, I dhramed a dhrame uv you, two nights agone! An' why, Carney dear, didn't you come a year ago? Sure, there'd 'a' be'n a weddin' as sure's my name's Pathrick Doniphan; for I was lonesome widout Mary!"

M. Papatou danced about the couple in ecstasies, rubbing his thin hands together, grinning, and firing off volley after volley of that awful *habitan* speech.

"V'la — sa mère — sa tante — ou sœur — voyez — bo' — quel grande — charma' — Papatou find — me, Papatou — dans l'rue — oh — heureux Doanphan — happee man!"

Finally, touching Doniphan's arm, he whispered, "Hi! Doanphan, gret times ziss! — wiskee!"

"*To* be sure!" exclaimed the potentate, recalled to all his self-importance. "Such occasions as dhis calls for dhe most onlimited hostility! Tim, be lively now! Bring dhe lady a sate, some of you! Dhere, Carney! next me own, dear! And, Tim, something for Mrs. Dugan, — out uv dhe little Killarney bar'l. Have it shtamin', Tim, and an ixtry gratin' uv nut-

mig! Ah! Carney dear!" he said, with a fond smile, "don't I remimber dhat ye war always fonder uv dhe nutmig dhan uv dhe spirit?"

Long and earnestly the two talked together, the rest of the company turning again to their own affairs, and respecting the exclusiveness in which Doniphan and Carney wrapped themselves. The clock sounded nine at length, and Carney protested that she must seek a lodging. Then hospitality (or "hostility," — they were all one to Doniphan) interposed, and Carney was informed that no other lodging need be looked for than could be furnished in that very house.

Carney was hereupon carried off to the inner apartments, and introduced to the female members of the household, Mrs. Tim and Mrs. Pat junior. More punch was brought in, and Carney's tongue outran the tongues of all the Doniphans. Her whole story was told to these eager listeners, — her intended journey, her expectation of Macrae (only she spoke of him as Mr. McGovern), her long residence at Guelph (as she put it romantically), and, finally, a revelation that she was penniless.

At this last the current of conversation suddenly changed. Doniphan's hotel, the "Pride of Neagh," had not been built up out of hospitalities to penniless women. Many a poor immigrant and emigrant could tell a different story from that. Many a one had come into that house with pounds, and been glad to get away again with shillings.

Old Doniphan's joy came to an end, therefore, the very moment Carney pronounced herself destitute of

money; and the old hypocrite hobbled out of Tim's private parlor, without even saying "good-night" to his dear Carney Roak.

Left to the tender mercies of surly Tim, Carney plunged into difficulties at once. A hot dispute — through which we need not follow them — raged between the two for a brief time, at the end of which Tim escorted Carney to the door, and bade her take herself out of sight. For a parting salute, Carney drew out of her bosom her bag of coins, and shook them in Tim's face, saying, "Mayhap, now, ye'd like what's in dhat. Dhe poun's an' shillin's of dhis wurruld isn't all in Pat Doniphan's till, an' isn't goin' dhere aither."

Out into the night the forlorn old woman went, but only to encounter a more rapacious specimen of St. Roch hospitality than Patsy Doniphan's. She had hardly gone a dozen paces, when a touch arrested her aimless steps.

"Is this Mrs. Dugan?" asked an unfamiliar voice. "Mrs. Dugan dhat was Carney Roak? Me uncle, Misther Blannerty, saw you at 'The Pride,' and sez he, 'Dhim murtherin Doniphans'll do her an injury.' An' sure, I've been watchin' iver sence, Mrs. Roak, for fear dhey'd be vi'lent wid you. An' me uncle says you're to come to his house an' sleep the night. Dhis way, plaise."

"I niver knowed a Blannerty in all me days," replied Carney; "but a roof's a roof in dhis weather."

Ushered by this stranger into an upper room, through labyrinthine passages which she could never have

threaded alone, Carney waited for some time without so much as one glimpse of the hospitable Mr. Blannerty. Her street-friend came in presently, however, with a steaming glass; and assuring her that his uncle sent it with his compliments, and that it had an extra grating of nutmeg on it, as his uncle remembered that all the Roaks were extravagantly fond of that article, and begging Carney to excuse Mr. Blannerty until he could find his Sunday clothes, he departed and left her to herself, — left her to drink the punch, and almost instantly to sink down to the floor in the most profound slumber that ever came over her.

Long after midnight Carney awoke, feeling chilled and weary. Moreover, she found herself in the open air. Voices of men in uniform were about her. One was saying, "Come, old woman, paving-stones are poor bedding for such old bones as yours."

Carney arose weakly, and spoke of Mr. Blannerty. The officers laughed at this, and brought upon themselves a storm of indignation. They laughed again, and offered to see Carney home. She had no home, and they marched her off. At the police-station she was searched, and not a *sou* could be found upon her.

Next morning the docket at the court where such cases are disposed of showed the following entry of committal: "Bridget Blannerty, vagrancy; one month," etc.

Carney's power of fibbing was not filched from her, at all events. But the post-office steps were henceforth as impossible to her as the deck of "The Breton," or the shores of Neagh.

Carney's month of incarceration passed; and again she stood upon the streets of Quebec a free woman, — free to starve, free to drift about in an old woman's helpless manner, free to hate the place which had offered her nothing but insult since she set her foot upon its pavements, free to hate the man through whose agency she had been led hither.

As to the man, her ill-feeling towards him was only fitful. There was no ardor in it, no virulence. For the town she reserved the full power of her wrath, and her desire for vengeance could compass no more dire calamity than a formal and utter forsaking of the town and all that was in it. With one longing look at the river and the ocean-going craft, therefore, Carney took her departure. Not caring whither she went, she drifted westwards, always keeping near the river.

At Batiscan, boatmen took pity on her, and brought her as far as Montreal. But there was no stopping here. City streets and city people were all hateful in Carney's sight, and on she went. But the cold northers were blowing now, and locking up rivers and lakes with chains of ice. There were no more boatmen, therefore, to help Carney on her purposeless journey. She must trudge, push her way on foot as best she might.

Here and there Carney found hospitality, — shelter and food, if nothing more. Again she fell into the hands of the law, was sent to poorhouses and jails, was passed on by rail to the next town.

After a whole winter of such tribulation, Carney found herself in a northern county, absolutely without

resource. An official scanned the wretched figure, and inquired into her case. Carney bewildered him with a long line of fibs which left him no resource but to send her out of the place, — as he thought charitably. Personally he put her upon a cross-country railway, ticketed her to the terminus, away off up in the north somewhere, and went back to his own warm house in peace.

At the end of this trip Carney felt indeed as if she had reached Ultima Thule. "And a mighty black place it is!" she said to herself.

One solitary light twinkled within her range of vision, and thither Carney directed her way. And here she found at last a bit of genuine hospitality.

Jim Bogle's house would seem no whit better to an architectural eye than some of the tumble-down cottages which lie by the roadside below Windsor Castle, if placed in such unfortunate contrast. But up here in the wild lands, and in Carney's eyes, it looked and was a haven of rest.

Great was her grief, therefore, next morning, to hear that Bogle and all his family were to close the house that day, and make a journey of forty miles away. Every year, when the snows melted and the streams filled up, Bogle made this change in his household arrangements. It was his business to go into a certain lumber district, to superintend the floating of the winter's cut of timber.

Inventive and reckless, Carney had no sooner heard a name given to the destination of the Bogles than she declared it was the very place she was in search of.

"An' did you iver hear a word uv a Misther Roak, — John Roak, — dhat lives dhere wid a wife an' a wife's sister, an' siven childher? an' good boys an' girls, too, they are, as iver counted a bead."

John Roak, his wife, wife's sister, and the seven children were productions of Carney's genius, but they served her purpose as well as so many realities; for Mrs. Bogle became at once intent upon taking Carney, and her liege good-humoredly consented.

On the second day the party came to a sheet of water, of which Carney declared, that, "if Arboe was here, it would be as purty as Neagh itself." Here Bogle entered at once upon the occupancy of a shanty, whose ins and outs every Bogle child, except the baby, was already familiar with; and here, the morning after their arrival, a shaggy head, a brown, good-featured face, looked in upon the party.

"H'lo, Jim!" cried a broad-speaking voice, "'ere you be agin, eh? Wull, who be the new one? That ben't your mother, now?"

"Naw," replied Bogle.

"Who be it, then?"

"Do'n knaw."

"I'm blowed!" Then turning towards the outer regions, the voice called, in louder speech, "Say, Bawffy, coom a-here! 'Ere's Jim, an' Missus Bogle, an' Missus Somebody-else!"

Si Kimber was not only an inn-keeper: in winter his establishment had no attractions, and Si went to the farther end of Little Bear Lake, to cut timber, Baffy and Debby also making frequent trips to the

camp. The last of these visits was now being made, and that very day Si was to turn over all responsibility as to the rafting to Bogle; he himself, scenting the coming summer, returning homewards, to furbish up fishing-tackle, to clean, calk, and paint boats.

The women found in Carney an object of great interest. The tale of her weary journeyings, her many disasters and disappointments, her vain search after the aforesaid imaginary John Roak, was full of thrilling importance in their view.

During the day Baffy Kimber set the wheels of change in motion again. It was clear enough to her mind that this old woman would be an incumbrance to the Bogles.

"Why in natur', then, can't we take her?" she asked Debby. "I'm awful lonesome when Joe's out guidin'." (Hereby hangs a tale, but Debby Kimber will not thank us for telling it.)

The proposal was made; Carney accepted, and before bedtime had reached her home, — the only home she had known for many months; and here she might have staid out all her days, had not events dragged her on yet one stage more, to play her part in the drama of "Ben Hollins."

All the summer she was at peace, with hardly a thought of Ben Hollins or Thomas Macrae to ruffle the serenity of her little round of daily labor; but, when the first autumn month came, it brought to Little Bear a gay party of sportsmen, — Bly Folliss, Germaine Parson, and Jack Brandon, — and to Carney a summons to unravel the threads of the half-forgotten past.

A rainy afternoon at Little Bear Lake is sometimes taken by the sportsmen as a providential reminder that guns and fishing-tackle need occasional repairing and putting in order. All hands, even Baffy and Debby, turn to at this necessary labor. On one such occasion, and to break a temporary lull in the conversation, Bly Folliss, holding a "tip" in one hand and a brass ferrule in the other, said, —

"By the way, Debby, did you ever hear any thing more about that crazy man who was here last September?"

"Not a thing," replied Debby. "I guess it was all right, or we should have been pretty sure to hear somethin' or other."

"A crazy man?" asked Carney.

"Parson thought it might be young Mr. Hollins of Millington," added Bly.

Carney's eyes began to glisten, and her attitude betrayed an eagerness to hear more, but not a word would she say.

"Yes," chimed in Germaine Parson: "I suspected it, to say the least; and my suspicion cost me a journey."

Other subjects followed, and this one passed away; but Carney Dugan's memories were aroused, a long train of them stretching twice the length of the two Provinces, and leading into a darkness which Carney now began to desire to penetrate.

In the evening of that same day the flashing of a gold ornament at Debby's throat attracted Carney's eye. Again and again she went up close to the girl, to see the bauble more nearly.

"It's dhe same as dhe other one," she muttered. "Dhe same as dhe one he left on the timber on Bridge Hill! Miss, might I see that?

"Where in dhe power uv mercy did ye git it, miss?" asked Carney, after turning the onyx cuff-button over and over.

"That crazy man the gentlemen spoke of left it here when his brother took him away."

"Dhe crazy man? what crazy man?" asked Carney.

Then Debby told the story of Ben's arrival, his short stay at the Kimbers', and his departure.

"Oh, murther! murther! it's him! it's him!" groaned Carney, adding inconsistently enough, "An' what was dhe name uv him?"

"The other man called him Ben," answered Debby.

"An' dhe other man's name?"

"Ben called him Tom."

Carney silenced herself now utterly. Not another word would she say upon the subject to any one at Little Bear Lake.

Soon after this Bly Folliss and party left the hunting-grounds, and returned to city life; and from the hour of their departure Carney Dugan grew restless and neglectful. The next party of sportsmen voted her a nuisance.

At length, some weeks after Folliss's departure, Carney made her appearance in Baffy Kimber's kitchen one morning, bundle in hand. Said she, —

"Mrs. Kimber, it's dhat kind you've been to me, dhat I'd like to work dhe last turn uv me fist for you.

But I'd a dhrame las' night. My Barney stud by me bed, he did; an' sez he, 'Carney, av ye don't hunt him up, and restore him to life, ye'll roast foriver and iver' An' it's scorchin' me, now, Mrs. Kimber; an' I'll just be goin'. What's dhe price of a rail-ticket to Taranty?"

Baffy and Debby set up a loud protest against her going out into the world again, at her age and alone, and with the winter coming on. But she was immovable. She had conceived a purpose, — an indefinite one, indeed, but even at that it was enough to rouse all the conscience that was left in her. She had heard just enough from Bly Folliss and his friend Parson to make her confident of their assistance; and with this she would unearth Ben Hollins, dead or alive. Perhaps he might be living, and safe at home, for aught she knew; but, if so, she must learn all the facts. Nothing less would serve her now, nothing less would keep that formidable ghost of her Barney from breaking in upon her slumbers.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AT ELMSWOODS.

WE must turn now in the direction of Millington, where Macrae arrived, after his visit at Hickory Hall, flushed with triumph and yet cautious. He was not foolish enough to suppose that his dangers were over: he knew that especially at Millington he must be constantly alert, that he must do no act, speak no word, upon which suspicion could hang.

> "His rolling eyes did never rest in place,
> But walkte each where for fear of hid mischaunce,
> Holding a lattis still before his Face,
> Through which he still did peep as forward he did pace."

At Elmswoods, and to many of his personal friends, therefore, Macrae gave an account of his travels in search of Ben, which had so much of truth in it that no one dreamed of there being so much as one grain of falsehood. He told boldly of his visit to Montreal and Quebec, and even spoke of having gone into the States.

And why should they not believe him? Not a suspicion had as yet been directed towards him, save possibly one little momentary doubt in Harper's mind, — a doubt which Harper himself was ashamed of, and dismissed.

Macrae brought gloom enough to Elmswoods. The family there had accepted it as proven, that, if Macrae returned without Ben, then hope must be laid aside, at least for the present. They drifted, therefore, into that state of uncertainty which is more distressing than a knowledge of the utmost evil. Poor Betty, silent, and sorrowful as Sisera's mother, looked inquiringly into the future; and the future only turned its disk towards her, all uninscribed and comfortless.

Throughout the town, also, men felt the same cloud of uncertainty. Many a citizen of Millington has said, since the new and better times came, that he never took a journey the first year after Ben's disappearance, without scanning the faces of travellers and of passers-by on the streets of cities and towns in the hope of discovering Ben Hollins. But such hopes rapidly grew fainter, and faded away.

An ever-shifting cloud of uncertainty gathered about Thomas Macrae also. He scented Harper's suspicion, faint though it was, and diverted it; and, when Harper discovered Carney's disappearance, no one was so eager to join in the search for her as Thomas Macrae. For he had his own reasons for wishing to see that woman again. Indeed, he would have given half his fortune to find her. And at Elmswoods he was always wondering whether they were not ready to rise in rebellion against the heavy weight he had laden them with. He looked into one face there with especial anxiety, eagerly watching for the first sign of indifference to the lost one, and as eagerly hoping that it might be followed by signs of better import to

himself. But no sign was vouchsafed to him, save one like Jonah's, — a great, rank gourd-vine of self-conceit, of delusive hope, which grew up in the stillness of the night, and withered away in the morning.

The uncertainties of life, however, do not last forever. The autumn and winter, fitting seasons for insecurity and dread, passed away; and Macrae had become partially dulled to the pain that gnawed so sorely at his heart. And, when the spring-time came, he felt a great access of elasticity.

Gradually during the winter the ladies at Elmswoods had been changing the color of their garb. At first less bright, it became sombre, and more sombre, — and at last black. "Ben is dead!" This was a great comfort to Macrae.

Almost daily now, there came into the family-circle at Elmswoods this dark young man, always gentle in his speech, manly in his bearing, calm and self-possessed.

To be near Betty Hartley, to be on such familiar terms with that household, to feel himself growing in favor day by day; to overhear old Sandy Dart prophesy, one day, that "she'll marry 'im yit, now I'll bat ye a tan-pun noat;" to touch the most electric hand in all this world, now and then; to soothe her grief in words for which she thanked him, — were not these worth living for?

The early autumn came again. The leaves fell from the trees, the crops came off the ground, warmth left the earth. And other changes followed, — one momentous change!

On a certain evening Macrae had dined with the family at Elmswoods. For half an hour after they sat together in the library. Of a sudden the three ladies, at a sign from Mr. Hollins, left the room; and a great constraint, which had been painfully perceptible to Macrae, deepened and enveloped him with shadows of thick darkness.

"Is it possible," he thought, "that Ben has been found? Am I to be charged at last with a crime which has so festered in my soul that I have all but charged myself with it openly, publicly, a score of times?"

With a beating heart Macrae looked at the elder one, who was pacing the floor absorbed in thought. With all his strength he held down the terror within him, as Ephraim Hollins came and laid a firm hand upon his shoulder. Then Ephraim Hollins found voice, and its tone was re-assuring.

"Thomas," he said, "my son is dead."

Macrae longed to ask how, and where, and when; but he was ashamed to be so weak, and held his peace.

"My son is dead. And I have been thinking, Thomas, that it is wicked in us to go on in this way any longer. I have therefore resolved to make a change in our affairs. A whole year now, we have mourned for Ben. We shall continue to mourn for as many years as we remain here. But we have also hoped: that must be no longer. And you, Thomas, have come to be a comfort to us."

What a sick, desperate feeling was that which came

over Macrae at these words! He could have gone upon his knees, and cried, "If Ben is dead, I murdered him." But the old man himself prevented him.

"Yes, Thomas: we shall not soon forget your self-sacrifice, and your energy in searching for our lost one. I took you to my heart the day you returned. I felt that you were given to me for a son, in place of Ben."

"What is all this coming to?" said Macrae to that faithful listener, himself.

"I have a proposal to make to you, therefore," the old man continued. "It is my habit to speak plainly, and to do business in the clearest possible way. I am too old, and too much broken now, to carry the responsibilities which crowd upon me. I must have help: a younger man must take my place, and it must be done soon. Of all the young men in my acquaintance, you are the one I should select, first and last. With your quick, well-tutored intelligence, you can easily master all the details of our business; and I lay the matter before you now, as one that has been much considered, and with the full approbation of my wife. I ask only one thing of you. Let the firm name remain 'Hollins and Son' as long as I live. When I am gone, do what you please. Think it over, — my son, — and tell me, at your own convenience, your conclusion."

It was no time to remain at Elmswoods. Macrae's heart was tugging at him: it all but spoke. The library air stifled him. Had he been charged by Mr. Hollins with all that his own conscience asserted of

him, had he been dismissed with anger and contempt, he could not have been more eager to get away, to be alone.

Once in the open air, and out upon the road, he gave way to the pent-up storm within. He reproached himself, he congratulated himself, he cursed the hour he was born, he bade himself be strong and watchful.

No man in Macrae's position, and with his strength, would think of making a spring at such a proposition as Ephraim Hollins had laid before him. A weaker man might. Before he had reached Bridge Hill, therefore, — for he chose the longest way home that night, — step number one in his progress was fully determined upon. It was, to take his uncle into consultation.

Next morning this was done. The shrewd old uncle saw the matter in only one light. It was simply a choice of career for his nephew. The law *might* bring prizes: "Hollins and Son" had actual prizes to offer. A Scotchman angles not where there *may be* fishes, but where there *are* fishes. The result of the conference, therefore, was, that Macrae finished all his papers in hand and gave them over to his uncle complete, said farewell to law-books, and went to studying ledgers at the mills.

The detail of the arrangement made by and between "Hollins and Son, parties of the first part," and "Thomas Macrae, gentleman, party of the second part, in the —— year of her gracious Majesty, and in accordance with the statute Geor. III. 34, *et al*," and all the rest of it, would be dull reading. We pass it

by, therefore; summing it all up in this, that, any day in October of the year after Ben's disappearance, you might have seen Thomas Macrae walking the mills, as Ben Hollins had before him. You might have witnessed Harper's subservience to him, — always with a slight mental protest; you might have heard many a sly joke at his expense among the older mill-hands in regard to his "marrying that girl." In brief, it was a new Ben that had come into the business; and more mill-men than one thought there ought to have been a feast at Elmswoods.

Even Mother Ballam had her word to say. "Wait," she said to Sandy and Mrs. Dart, "wait till the han' o' God is laid on yon young man!"

All that autumn and winter Macrae was again a student; studying machinery, and textures, and raw materials, and all the intricacies of a great and prosperous business, — studying at Elmswoods house, also, the labyrinth of an art deeper than any business.

His sonship there grew every day into more apparent shapeliness. The old man and wife drew him closer and closer to them, each striving to outdo the other in efforts to make this man as much their son as might be.

At times he even seemed to have come very near to the real life and soul of that household, that is, to Betty Hartley. But it was as earth comes near to sun. The attraction drew him towards her to a certain point: there was a perceptible shudder, a movement of the elements, and away he went into space again, towards the farther solstice of his orbit of love.

It became his almost daily habit to dine at Elmswoods. The waiting-maid set his plate without direction or question. In the December days, when the winds howled bleakly, and the thick, driving snows made night awful, he was even pressed to remain till morning. The lowest of the seven heavens was tendered to him, in the shape of a pair of slippers embroidered by a hand he worshipped, and laid by the fireside, in the blue room, — the chamber directly over the dining-room. From the window he looked over towards Comfort Lodge many a morning, wishing that its doors would open and invite him in.

"Patience! patience!" he exclaimed. "If this devil within me hurries me on too fast, I shall make a fool of myself."

Business called Macrae away from Millington exactly once a month. If Harper had had his wits about him, after Macrae came to the mills, he would certainly have drawn conclusions. But Harper and many others did not know that Macrae went to Toronto on the evening express, and returned at noon next day. They did not know that in the evening, or early in the morning, he went to the Toronto post-office, and took out one or more letters addressed to "E. P. Hallowell, Esq." They did not know that he made little trips to the towns near Toronto, — to Hamilton, St. Catherine's, and even, for a change, over the border to Niagara, Buffalo, and Lockport. They did not know that he always selected for these trips only such towns as possessed banking facilities, and that he invariably purchased on these occasions a draft in some assumed

name, indorsing it, "Pay to the order of E. P. Hallowell," and "Pay to the order of Dr. Peterson."

Being in ignorance of all this, Harper was not responsible, certainly, for the lapse of interest in Ben's case, nor for the general acceptance of Thomas Macrae as Ben's successor. In after times he blamed himself, accused himself, averred that he "felt it" all the time, that "something told him," every day, "that Ben Hollins was not dead, and that Macrae knew more about it than any other living man."

This was all very well, but certainly Harper never took the trouble to say these things until all the good which might have been set in motion by them had been accomplished in another way.

These excursions operated upon Macrae himself as a relief to the strain of his daily life at Millington. For a long time, too, the letters from Hickory Hall were monotonously unexciting.

"Your brother remains about the same."

"Symptoms of improvement excited some hope in us last week, but I am sorry to say that they have disappeared."

"There is no change for the better, nor, I am glad to say, for the worse."

The word "improvement" gave Macrae an occasional shock, but he laughed at it. "Improvement! Not much improvement for such a case as Ben's, I imagine. 'Once insane, always insane,' is a good enough adage for me." Thus he blinded himself, and called it reasoning.

Invariably Macrae came back to Millington in

better spirits. The dulness of his love-making was relieved. He felt that he might begin afresh. He knew the fierceness of his own ardor, and felt Betty's total want of any such feeling as love for him; but when, out of very courtesy, she softened towards him now and then, he believed that she was opening the door of her heart a little, just enough to let the archer in. But one single step on Macrae's part, to take advantage of what Betty intended as courtesy and nothing more, locked the door again and barred it. That heart was occupied, filled to overflowing with sweet remembrance of the dead, — of him, that is, whom Betty almost, and others altogether, believed to be dead.

And, whether Betty Hartley's words and deeds encouraged or depressed him, Macrae took more and more courage out of the knowledge that in a few months, as per agreement with Ephraim Hollins, — as soon as he should have learned the business thoroughly, and affixed his signature to that formal document in which he was named a "party," — all that once was Ben's would be his. All except Betty, — and why not Betty too? he asked himself.

Was it really love that drew this man? Or was it that old spirit of gaining his end, of accomplishing a purpose, of having his way?

CHAPTER XIX.

THE ALDERNEY.

ALTHOUGH loath to let Carney go, the Kimber family were thoroughly deceived by her John Roak fiction, and yielded to her. Many persons in their place and circumstances — and not necessarily evil-minded ones — would have given Carney some sort of verbal blessing, and packed her off; but the Kimbers had little knowledge of those "airy nothings" which so largely take the place of practical and substantial things among politer and less genuine people, and therefore gave Carney a paid ticket to Toronto, a snug little sum of money, and, for words, this sincere admonition, "And if you don't find him, Carney, come straight back to us."

Carney reached Toronto just as the sun was sending his last rays of kisses to the crosses on church-steeples and towers. The numerous invitations hanging on the walls, for the behoof of the tired and hungry, she heeded not, for the very good reason that she could not read one word of them.

The tide of incoming travellers was pushing its way rapidly into the busier parts of the city, and Carney could think of nothing better than to float along with it. Soon it spread itself out more and more widely,

and was forever lost in the great ocean of humanity, leaving Carney as a bit of wood or of weed is left upon the waters. She peered into people's faces, she looked in at the shop-windows; but there was no greeting for her, no welcome, — not an intimation, even, that there was any place for her among these busy thousands.

At last she found herself in front of the new post-office in Adelaide Street; and, as she stood looking at its long frontage, she was suddenly inspired to enter. A man had just gone in, and Carney recognized that man. She followed him, therefore, at a little distance, saw him go to the "General Delivery," take out a letter in a dark blue envelope, look at the address, and put the letter in his pocket.

She went deliberately towards this man, moving more and more rapidly as she saw him turning in an opposite direction. Presently he disappeared behind a light inside door. The door came to with the muffled bang of rubber listing, exactly in time to swing inwardly against Carney, and push her back a pace or two, bruising her outstretched fingers. Twice it swung in a decreasing arc, each time giving the inexperienced and persisting woman a knock, and eliciting from her remarks not at all complimentary to doors that swing both ways.

At last she conquered this fiendish obstacle, and placed herself on the other side of it, receiving another reminder of its existence in the shape of a blow in the back, which made her heels tingle, and sent her half-way through the vestibule which it cov-

ered. In the midst of a fresh objurgation, she remembered that she was pursuing an object, and, looking about her, found that her game was gone. The man had disappeared altogether.

She now opened the outer door, and passed into the street. There were men, numbers of them, hurrying in and out to receive their evening mail, or passing to and fro; but the man whom Carney Dugan wanted, the only one she cared to speak to, was gone. Muttering, and shaking her fist, she resumed her wanderings.

At eight o'clock she was attracted by the open stairway of a fine new building in Princess Christina Street, West, and sat down upon the steps, wearied out. Presently a gentleman of forty years came down these steps, jingling a bunch of keys, and stopped to look at her. An impulse of charity happened to strike this man, all the more notable for that he had just been inquiring of himself where he should find a woman to rid his new building of its last accumulation of carpenters' chips.

"What are you doing here, my good woman?" he asked.

"It's lookin' fur worruk, I am, sir, dhis blessed day, an'"—

"Can you sweep? and scrub?" interrupted Mr. Blossom.

"Is it sweep? Sure, I was born wid a broom in me mouth,—in me han's, I mane, an' it's all the same. Yer anner'd ought to see dhe shweepin' I done in me own pairlor, whin I was kapin' house.

An' for dhe dust, I'd niver abide a bit nor speck bigger nor a tinp'ny nail."

The recitation of Carney's virtues as a housekeeper, purely imaginary, would have stretched over whole pages if Mr. Blossom had not been in too great a hurry to listen. Breaking in upon her promising speech, therefore, he asked, "How far away do you live?"

"Will, sir, I tell you dhe solemn throot. At prisint I'm stayin' wid me son-in-law dhat kapes dhe big hotel down beyant, be dhe railroad bank. But sure, if yer anner wud hev a room in dhe house now, dhat a body cud slape in, I'd be right here airly, to go at dhe worruk."

"A good idea!" thought Mr. Blossom.

"Only," he said, "there isn't such a thing as a bed in the house."

"Niver mind dhat, sir! Ladies has ways dhat men niver thinks of."

"All right, then. I'll leave you to take care of yourself. Here are the keys of the south hall, third floor. You can sleep in any one of the rooms you like tonight, and in the morning go to work on those rooms first. Mr. Folliss wishes to move in on Wednesday next." Carney almost burst out at sound of that name: her eyes twinkled, and her tongue trembled; but reflection came, and she was silent.

Good-naturedly taking the risk of leaving with Carney a small sum of money to procure the utensils of her new occupation on the morrow, Mr. Blossom went homeward. And while this excellent, but for once

not very business-like, man was being soundly rated by his wife for taking in a stranger in such a fashion, Carney, after a frugal supper of bread, was rolling up her shawl and bundle for a pillow, and stretching herself upon the bare floor of a room which was soon to be transformed into the cosiest of bachelor's quarters.

Great was Mr. Blossom's triumph over his critical and suspicious wife, next morning, when he found Carney hard at work, and doing her work, we will say, in an unexceptionable manner. At dinner,--they dine at dinner-time in Toronto, not at supper-time,—Mr. Blossom was profuse in his account of Carney.

"Come and see for yourself, my dear," he exclaimed: "she is really quite a character."

Mrs. Blossom went down to "The Alderney" that afternoon, and changed her opinion.

"On the whole, George," she acknowledged, "this may be the very best thing that could have happened. So much better, at any rate, than one of these young trollops, or even a middle-aged woman, with their nahsty, prying ways. The gentlemen will really be pleased, I know." Mrs. Blossom understood bachelors to a nicety.

It was a congenial bit of occupation for this good lady to fit out Carney Dugan with all the requisites for housekeeping in one of the attics of "The Alderney," and also to deck her person in garments suitable to her station. For Mrs. Blossom had finally gone a long distance farther than her husband in regard to Carney's connection with the new building. The husband had only thought of her as a make-shift for

the cleaning-out of the rooms: the wife committed herself to Carney's establishment as a permanent fixture.

"The Alderney" was an experiment. It was built for the accommodation of single gentlemen, for whom public hotel life had no attractions, and boarding-houses were not to be spoken of. Bly Folliss, Germaine Parson, and Jack Brandon had engaged three suites of rooms before a brick was laid, on condition that no other rooms should be rented without their consent, and, *per contra*, that they should secure, or do their best to secure, suitable tenants for the rest of the premises.

The stipulations were faithfully observed on both sides; and, within a month after the opening, twenty-five gentlemen were installed in quarters which were the envy of all bachelordom in Toronto, while Mr. Blossom congratulated himself daily on the return of an equal per cent on his investment. An experienced *chef*, whose office was upon the ground floor, revelled in the delight of figuring out just what and how much twenty-five gentlemen would eat and drink daily; and counted his order-cards with a satisfaction equalled only on Saturdays, when he again and again looked over the entries in his bank-book.

Other servants were duly provided, — younger ones, for the most part; but Carney, without appointment, drifted into the position of Mother Superior. And it must be noted here, that a great change came over the woman. From head to foot she was clad as she never had been clad before. In one of Mrs. Blossom's

cast-off hats re-built for Carney's use, in a respectable woollen gown, with hands cleansed by frequent contact with hot water, and with a deal of attention paid by Mrs. Blossom herself to the smoothing of her rough white hair, and to its confinement beneath tidy white caps, you would hardly have recognized Carney Dugan, formerly of Millington. She had become *Mrs.* Dugan of Toronto, if you please.

The day that Bly Folliss moved into "The Alderney," he looked at this tidy Irishwoman twenty times, and was puzzled. She made no sign of recognizing Folliss; and, in the vigor of his labor, Bly looked and forgot with rapidity. Towards evening, however, he flung himself into an arm-chair, and said, —

"Parsy! that woman, — she's a necromancer, a female Balsamo. She'll be the Countess de Fenix to-morrow, Mrs. Pellegrini next Monday, and the Wandering Jewess by Christmas."

"How so?"

"Have you noticed her, looked at her?"

"Not particularly."

"Then let me call her in. Observe her, and tell me what you think."

Carney came, was duly reviewed by Germaine Parson, and passed out after dusting a table-drawer which Folliss pretended to wish immediately attended to.

"Well," said Parson, "if I hadn't my full senses, I should say it was the old woman at Si Kimber's."

"Exactly," chimed in Bly Folliss.

"No, not exactly, at all. The name is the same, but the woman is not. There are myriads of these

Dugans. A little resemblance, that is all. Heigho! [yawning] I sha'n't distress myself much about it. Plenty to do before I get to bed."

Parson retired to his own apartments, and Folliss set himself to arranging books. Presently Mrs. Dugan came in again, and Folliss was tempted to question her. It did not occur to him that any tact was necessary, as may be seen from his first inquiry, which was, —

"How about the crazy man, Mrs. Dugan?"

"Which?" asked Carney.

"The crazy man, you know, up at Si Kimber's. You knew something about him, didn't you?"

"What's dhe man sayin'?" said Carney. "What crazy man? An' who's dhis — who's Gimmer?"

"Don't you know Si Kimber? Aren't you the woman whom I saw up there, only a few weeks ago?" asked Folliss.

"Me!" exclaimed Carney, "Me at Gimmer's! An' where on dhe airth is dhat?"

Carney's replies were made with such perfect dissimulation, that Folliss began to think, as Parson did, that it was only a resemblance, after all. Moreover, Carney was too old to turn pale or to turn red: her withered vellum-like skin had not a particle of emotion in it, and Folliss was completely deceived.

As if, however, to give his suspicions one last chance for justification, he asked, —

"Isn't your name Carney?"

"Sure, sir," replied Carney, "I'm too old to be called be anny nickname, dhe likes o' dhat. It wud

be betther to say *Mrs.* Dugan to me, sir, wid all respect I say it. An' besides, me name is Margaret."

"Oh!" said Folliss; and dismissed the subject, for the present, — for the present only; for Carney Dugan never came in his sight without somehow suggesting to Bly Folliss the crazy man, Si Kimber's, Thomas Macrae, and — general mystification.

All through the late autumn, the early winter, the holidays, and down to a certain day in February, Carney kept to a certain round of duties at "The Alderney," saying little. For a woman who had absolutely no correspondence, she made a remarkable number of visits to the post-office. The "General Delivery," too, seemed to have especial attractions; and Carney became quite adept in handling the door which swung both ways. Not once, however, in all these months did she have so much as a second fleeting glimpse of the man whom she had once almost laid hands upon, and whom she was looking for.

On the February day before mentioned, Carney had occasion to go across the town to visit a recent acquaintance, a woman of her own nation, who dwelt in, and was in fact proprietress of, a hostelry dignified with the title of "The Prince of Cumberland House." Mrs. Brannigan was a woman of much ability and of many sorrows. Left a widow long years ago, she had seen her property grow in value, and her two sons in vice. She held up her head, therefore, one minute, and cast it down with shame the next. She had fallen in with Carney somehow, and Carney comforted her; to that extent, that Carney's visits at "The Prince

of Cumberland House" became very frequent. This house was near the upper railway-station; and on the day in question Carney arrived just as the evening express from the west made its brief stop before going on. The outcoming passengers jostled her, one with especial rudeness. She looked up at him, uttered a cry, — "Misther Thom," — looked at the rapidly retreating traveller, stood one minute collecting her thoughts, and then calling to a coachman standing at the curb ordered him to drive her to the post-office.

"An' mind," said she, "quick, do it in a jiffy!"

The other coachmen laughed. "Room! room!" shouted one. "The royal carriage! Make way for her gracious Majesty, the Queen of Ballimacrew!"

Carney contented herself with firing back a few choice bombs of speech; and the coach rattled on to Adelaide Street, Carney calling out now and then, "Faster! faster!"

Once within the office, Carney quickly selected a station for herself. Going up to the "General Delivery," she took a position inside the railing, turned her back half way to the window, and waited. The clerk saw her through the glass box-fronts, and, leaning half out of the window, asked Carney what she wanted.

"I'm waitin', I am, fur me masther. He'd be here at siven o'clock, an' I was to wait an' go wid him till he'd get dhe fish fur breakfast an'" —

The clerk disappeared before Carney could finish her speech, and she stopped with a grumble. "It's very good manners dhey tache in dhis schoolhouse! An' me a-freezin' dhe toes aff me a-waiting here." A

voice struck upon Carney's ear, and she looked up eagerly.

"Letters for Mr. Hallowell, if you please," the voice said.

"Hallowell?"

"E. P."

Mr. E. P. Hallowell, that is to say, Thomas Macrae, received four letters, all alike outwardly, all in blue envelopes. Carney lifted her hand to touch him, then a great fear came upon her: she hesitated, withdrew her hand, and, instead, turned about and followed Macrae. She went out through the side vestibule immediately behind Macrae, and still neither touched him nor spoke to him. On the sidewalk she stopped, and let Macrae hurry away. "Better! better!" she said to herself, and went immediately back to the delivery-window.

"Has me masther been here yet?" she asked.

"Who is your master?"

"He's the dark gintleman, sir — E. P." —

"Oh! — Hallowell, is that the man?"

"Yis, sir, an' a thousan' thanks to you."

"Same to you. Mr. Hallowell took his letters a few minutes ago, and went off directly. I say, he's queer, isn't he? Only comes once a month."

"He's dhat quare, young man, dhat dhe missis is druv to death wid him. He pretinds to come afther dhe letthers ivery day uv his blessed life; an' dhe missis is bed-rid, she is, or she'd come herself."

"Oh, ho!" said the clerk. "Queer — I thought

so;" and, disliking the cold draught, he unceremoniously closed the glass again.

Carney hurried to "The Alderney," and knocked at Bly Folliss's door.

"Misther Fully," said she, "wud ye be dhat good to write fur me — on a piece uv paper?"

"What shall I write?" asked Bly.

"E. — P. — what's dhis now? Holly — I think it would be Holly — hill, mayhap. Dhat's nigh or next to it, annyway. I've something to do fur dhe gintleman, an' I'd forgit his name, as sure's me own's Car — what's dhis I'm sayin'? — *Margaret* Dugan. Dhim cars is always runnin' in me head, whin I've been to Mrs. Brannigan's, she lives dhat near to dhe station. Good-night, sir, an' manny thanks."

CHAPTER XX.

CHANGES.

IT will have been perceived, that the events of the preceding chapter occurred during the second winter of Ben Hollins's stay at Hickory Hall. And now, to return thither, we have to note, that, as that winter advanced, most notable changes were going on within the institution.

Room after room was vacated. Many tearful and yet joyous farewells were uttered at the office-door; and carriages were almost every day rolling down the avenue with restored men and women who were going home again. It was something like the breaking-up of a school for the holidays.

Now, these especially good seasons for the cure of the insane are strongly marked; but there is no known periodicity in them, no rule by which they can be foretold. The fact only is noted, put by for definition, and, — mark the prophecy! — some day it will be defined.

In consequence of the many departures, therefore, and of the correspondingly few arrivals, a strange silence reigned at Hickory Hall. The groups which gathered in the grounds, or walked upon the frosty avenues, became unusually small. The trio of mag-

nates grew sad, and were in danger of forgetting all about "general paresis," for lack of new patients to condemn to that dire fatality.

In the general shower of good which seemed to be falling, Ben Hollins was receiving sufficient to make Drs. Peterson and Laidlaw rejoice. Flashes of intelligence grew more frequent; but, remember! they were only flashes. The element of permanence was still lacking. Lightning is very bright, but not a good thing to depend upon for reading.

In the crisp atmosphere of December, Dr. Peterson began to take Ben out with him in his carriage. He held the doctor's horse very reliably, when that functionary had occasion to stop at one of the stores. Two or three concert-troupes came that way, and Ben was made happy with the sound of sweet music. A stereopticon was brought to the town; and Ben was on a pinnacle of glory while the yellow palaces, the purple mountains, and other monstrosities floated before him.

Meantime, Dr. Peterson cared very little about the music of the "Protean Band," or the glories of Professor Photog's "unrivalled exhibition of the unsurpassed landscapes of Italy, France, and the land of William Tell." He sat through these second-rate performances for Ben's sake; and he made notes of Ben's emotions, of Ben's sayings, and of his conduct.

In January two young men of the town called at the office to invite the doctors to attend a spelling-match at the town-hall, adding, that, if there were any patients at the asylum whom they would like to bring, they also would be made welcome.

Dr. Peterson said, after these young men were gone, "Laidlaw, I shall take Ben."

"What for?"

"To spell."

"To spell?"

"Yes. I have noticed that he is an authority on that subject. The men in the convalescent ward appeal to him every day, and I have never known of his making one mistake."

"It is a risk," said Laidlaw.

"Not a great one," replied Peterson.

"What if he should become excited?"

"I shall watch him. To tell you the truth, I am willing that he should be excited, up to a certain point," Dr. Peterson said emphatically.

"Is that point definite, determinable?" asked Laidlaw.

"As much so as the end of that line you are tracing with your pencil. And, in one word, I am determined to try Ben. We have been like watchmakers, you and I: we have had Ben here a good many months; we have taken him to pieces, so to speak, and put him together again. I propose to wind him up now, and see whether he will go, or not. If not, we must be patient. You agree with me?"

Laidlaw replied, "With the slightest hesitation, doctor, with a mere shadow of a doubt. You are far beyond the rest of us, however, in origination. Your diagnosis is always clear, your prognosis more often justified than that of any other man in the profession. I speak of facts now, I am not bandying

compliments. If you take Ben, I would like to go with you."

The evening came, and the town-hall was filled with old and young. Hundreds of faces were uplifted towards the stage, in anticipation of the glee to come. For the highest and best in the town were to be there, and show themselves off. The two coming candidates for Congress were in the ranks; and politicians who could not spell at all sat among the audience, trembling lest these gentlemen should injure their chances by the introduction of this new element into the discussion of personal merits. But oh! lucky chance! they both went down in the vain endeavor to thrust an *f* into "*phlebotomy*."

There were lawyers, clergymen, doctors, schoolteachers, editors, merchants, barbers, mechanics, reporters, and young men and maidens from the high school, from St. Brazennose's College, and from Madame du Enna's "French, Italian, German, Spanish, and — English School."

Good old Judge Minturn had been requested to "give out the words." The judge is a pan-opticon, a man who sees, comprehends, and devours every thing, including words and definitions. His long, thin body and limbs indicate the dryness of his daily, hourly sustenance. His jaws are always in slight motion, as of one who chews the cud of unnumbered words and definitions. His skin is, in color and substance, precisely like an old monastic volume: one look at him will convince any doubter that the legend of the use of the human cuticle, in ancient times, for manuscript

purposes, is not merely possible, but entirely practicable.

The vocabulary of law, theology, anatomy, therapeutics, commerce, politics, astronomy, mythology, geology, botany, — in brief, the whole verbal range, — was within Judge Minturn's grasp. He stood before the two long lines of contestants, and delivered a genial yet solemn speech, announcing the rules of the spelling-match, and giving good advice. This was simply sharpening his scythe, so to speak. Then, with a reaper's whirl, he sent a word among the spellers. Down they went, one, two, three. From that point, the contest went on briskly, and the fun waxed warmer and warmer. The ranks thinned with more rapidity than Cæsar solemnly assures us those of the Goths did when his light horse bore down upon them.

So simple a word as "Atticize" slew scores. "Foreflow" — a word which any one can spell, even in public — was treated to a parti-colored coat which made it unrecognizable. F-o-u-r was impossible, f-o-e-r the same, f-o-a-r no better; and the spellers even floundered about with *ph* for a handle to their word. Down they went, and the newest comers turned their bewildered wits to the second syllable. F-l-o, f-l-o-e, f-l-o-h, were pronounced in succession. Next day any inhabitant of Hickoryville could have spelled that little word correctly; but somehow it required many attempts before the one who could do it that evening was found. One solitary colored brother was in line, near the foot. As he solemnly, but confidently, gave it as his opinion that "F-o-f-l-o would

fill the bill in Cincinnati or 'Ole Bluegrass,'" the house roared.

A politician spelled five words correctly. His turn coming once more, the judge gave him — "*Corruption.*" The speller's eye happened to light upon the burly form of an office-holder who had added several mills to the local taxes of Hickory County; and without hesitation he sacrificed himself thus: "M-i-k-e, cor; E-a, rup; g-a-n, tion, — *corruption.*" The "ins" hissed, the "outs" applauded; Mr. Eagan himself finally quelled the riot by laughing until he was black in the face.

Suddenly the audience became aware that the climax was approaching. Of all the spellers, there remained only a judge of the Superior Court, an Episcopal clergyman, the principal of St. Brazennose's, two very bright young ladies — and a queer-looking creature who stood with his arms dangling, his head moving about as if purpose and attention were unknown to him, and who had unbuttoned his vest and untied his cravat.

The judge surveyed this scattered company with basilisk eye, and called out, "Antiphlogistic."

The clergyman took it up, "A-n, an; t-e" —

"Next," said the judge.

A sweet voice responded, "A-n, an; t-i, ti; f" —

"Next."

"A-n, an; t-i, ti; p-h-l-o, phlo; g-i-s-t, gist; i-c, ic, — antiphlogistic, oh, yes! ha, ha!"

The audience, struck with the humor of it, looked at poor Ben, then at poor Mr. Episcopal Minister, and burst into a responsive "Ha, ha!"

"Fuguist," called out the judge.

Another soft soprano suggestively, almost inquiringly, offered "F-u-g-e"—

"Next."

Proudly and promptly the diapason tones of Judge Blaney, of the Superior Court, rang out,—

"F-u-g-u-e"—

"Next," exclaimed Judge Minturn, poking his finger at his learned brother, and saying, "Not exactly in our line, Judge."

The schoolmaster spelled the word correctly, as a schoolmaster ought, and plumed himself visibly. Next moment he glanced across the stage. His only competitor was that strange-looking creature; and an expression of contempt, almost of shame, overspread the schoolmaster's face. The spectators took up the contrast between these two, and the schoolmaster was looked upon as the easy victor of the evening. Nevertheless, in physical appearance, Ben had unmistakably the best of it. Had the gleam of well-balanced intelligence, that indescribable something which some men have and some have not, and which is marked upon men's faces in an infinite scale of degrees,—had this lighted up Ben's countenance as it did only a few years ago, the public would have made short work of the comparison.

As it was, however, a chattering lady expressed the public sentiment, probably, when she said to her neighbor, "Isn't it absurd? Why, that is one of the patients from the Hall."

And even so a great hush fell upon the audience

and the defeated spellers. Men and women grew very grave, and craned their necks to see and hear the coming contest. A flash of doubt, of pity, instantly covered with judicial gravity, lighted up Judge Minturn's face, and he turned and whispered to Dr. Peterson. The doctor stood up, to make himself heard more distinctly, and said with all his voice, "No, sir: go on, if you please."

Not for all the world would Dr. Peterson have withdrawn Ben from the match at that moment. To his mind, a principle of mental science was struggling towards revelation. He might not succeed in grasping it, but he certainly was not the man to throw away the opportunity.

Judge Minturn returned, therefore, to his task. From the character of the words he now took up, he must have intended to bring the work of the evening to a close as quickly as possible. He became a very catapult; and it would seem an impossibility for child, woman, or man, to stand long under the shower of verbal bowlders hurled at the schoolmaster and Ben. For ten minutes, however, they bore it well; until, in fact, their success became monotonous. Some of the audience even went out.

Then the judge called, "Hygroscopicity."

It was schoolmaster's turn. He fidgeted a little, and thought. Perhaps his brain was bewildered. So had Ben's been for a long time.

"Time is up," said the judge.

"H-y, hy; g-r-o, gro; s-p"—

"Next," said the judge; and the schoolmaster sat

down, wondering whereunto this might grow, and building up in his soul a bitter grudge against that abominable science, or art, or whatever it might be — hygroscopicity.

All eyes turned now upon Ben.

"Oh, yes!" said he, "you want to catch me, I imagine. Hygroscopicity! Oh, yes! A word of Greek origin, I should say."

Schoolmaster looked foolish. What would he not have given for a knowledge of Greek roots and forms, for a procession of Greek characters dancing before his eyes, and helping him to spell that dreadful word!

"Spell it, then, my dear fellow," said the judge kindly and patronizingly.

"Oh, yes!" said Ben, "I'll try. I've never been kicked by a goose yet."

The spectators tittered, and Ben began, —

"H-y, hy; g-r-o, gro; s-c-o, sco; p-i-c, pic; i, i; t-y, ty, — hygroscopicity. Ha, ha, what a devil of a word!"

O Ben, Ben! for shame! But it was "the Giant's" fault that you made this slip.

The judge waited a moment for the enthusiasm of the audience to subside, and then called order, saying, "The rule is — five words more."

What words! where on earth did they come from? Words heptasyllabic, words octosyllabic, words beginning with an *x* which had succumbed, in pronunciation, to *z*.

"The gentleman has not missed a word," announced

Judge Minturn; "and Judge Blaney's side, and Mr. Hallowell, are the victors."

Yes, Ben, thou art a gentleman, and would be if thou hadst spelled "bullsfoot" with three *t*'s. And more's the pity that a gentleman, nay hundreds of them, should be brought to such a pass!

Awake, science! Spend no more time and strength in petty fightings over this theory and that. Coolly weigh and test the theories! Cast out the rubbish, and keep the gold! Press on towards the light! Shall revelation cover only the good of men's bodies? Is there not some Jenner, some Harvey, in the future's womb, who shall discover the pulse of the mind, the mental vaccination?

After returning to his office, and seeing Ben safe in his room, Dr. Peterson took down a volume of records, and looked carefully at all he had written there respecting case No. 2,361. He compared old entries with newer ones; he looked at lengthy arrays of facts in cases of other patients, and brought them into close view by the side of the facts in Ben's case.

But to say that Dr. Peterson came to any conclusion, by means of these studies, would be to say what is not true. The true physician, whether of mind or body, does not call theories conclusions. The quack is ever ready to proclaim his theories, and call them facts. A conclusion is a very easy thing to him, prophecy mere child's play. Unhappily, there are some quacks with regular diplomas in their possession.

But Dr. Peterson did derive a great satisfaction from his review of Ben's case. Next day he studied

his patient with even greater care than ever; and not that day only, but constantly.

It was plainer and plainer that nature was doing much for Ben Hollins, — Hallowell, as they supposed him to be at Hickory Hall. "And I am nature's servant and assistant," wisely said Dr. Peterson.

Ben kept up that solemn farce of the professional medic; and Dr. Peterson even tried to make use of it, as he sought to employ any and every indication of mental activity, encouraging and stimulating in one direction, diverting in another. With delight he saw Ben's scope enlarging, even in this factitious exercise of his faculties.

Not a week after the spelling-match an attendant called the doctor from one of the other rooms in Ben's ward, and requested him to go softly to Ben's door. The door was slightly ajar, and Dr. Peterson saw Ben whisking about the room with a pillow. One moment the pillow would be up in the air, the next moment it and Ben went tumbling and rolling about upon the floor, sometimes Ben uppermost, sometimes the pillow. At last, after great exertions, Ben seemed to have conquered this pugnacious adversary, and laid his pillow upon the bed; then wiping his perspiring face, and breathing hard, he turned to address imaginary occupants of the room: —

"Well, me dear friends [like a true son of the Dominion, he never said *my*], I had me doubts at first, thinking, in fact, that your son ought to be sent to a different institution; but I think we can take him. He proved to be a little violent when we brought him

into the ward, but that was only natural. At all events, we can try him here for fifty or sixty years; and if he doesn't improve by that time, — I may as well be candid with you, — there will be no hope for him. No hope, — no hope," continued Ben, slowly and musingly. Dr. Peterson watched him, as he came out of the room and sauntered away down the hall. Again and again Ben was repeating softly to himself, "No hope, — no hope," his head bent downward, his carriage indicative of a mental struggle towards the comprehension of *hope* and *no hope.*

Dr. Peterson touched Ben slightly, and asked, "Doctor, is there any hope for your new patient?"

The revery, the struggle, that is, with memory, — just such a struggle as any man may fall into, any day, only in Ben's case it was more difficult than in yours, — was broken. Ben stood irresolute one moment, exclaimed, "Oh, I was near forgetting him!" and bounded off to his room. Ben's room was in a short side-passage, which stood at a right angle with the main hall. Thither Dr. Peterson followed him, in the interests of science. But at this moment Ben's tormentress seemed to consider herself neglected, and as Ben reached his door she whispered to him. With a bound and a cry, Ben whipped the air with both arms, exclaiming, "Now, don't you do that again!" and scampered back into the hall. At the angle he ran full tilt into Dr. Peterson. There was a terrible upset: science was overthrown again, and Ben's cure once more postponed.

Ah, well! it is seldom any thing serious happens at

Hickory Hall. Dr. Peterson lay upon the floor, laughing so heartily over his *rencontre* that he was obliged to call up some self-control, or he would have screamed outright, and that is not allowed in the convalescent ward of Hickory Hall; and over the doctor stood Ben, blushing, confused, full of regrets and apologies. He stooped to lift the doctor up, and it occurred to him to say, "You went down, sir, as if something had struck you. You must have been kicked by a goose, sir."

"Yes, Ben," replied the doctor; "and a pretty powerful goose too."

"Ha, ha!" said Ben; "but you can't spell Hyros — what's this, now?"

Some of the patients were gathering upon the scene now; and "Merry," always proud of his powers, took up Ben's words.

"Spell what?" he asked with a sniffle.

"Hygroscopicity," answered Ben.

"Pshah!" snarled "Merry." "I could spell that standing on one leg! Pshah! You ought to hear daughty spell, — backwards, forwards, crossways, any way you like, — first syllable in the middle! Pshah! I was marshal of the city of New York when I was only" —

"Now, don't you do that again!" cried Ben, hurrying away.

"I shall do it again, if I wish to," replied "Merry" angrily, throwing the words at Ben's retreating figure. "I can be marshal of this establishment, if I say the word, — and if you, doctor, will only let me go down town, and get my teeth fixed!"

CHAPTER XXI.

BROUGHT TO BAY.

THE day following Carney's second discovery of Thomas Macrae in Toronto, she brought the paper upon which Bly Folliss had written at her request, and asked that gentleman to read it.

"It's dhat haird fur me to remimber names, sir," said she. "An' such a name as dhat! Wheriver did dhe man get it? An' why isn't it Mac — something, an' done wid it, like an honest man?"

With this exposition Carney went off, repeating to herself, "Hollyhill — Holly — ull, E. P."

At the post-office, whither she betook herself at once, she courtesied gravely to the clerk, and, doubtless by way of refreshing his memory, opened fire with her questions of the preceding day, —

"Has me masther been here the day? Dhe missus is dhat hasty for dhe letthers, she druv me out, she did."

"Your master? Oh! you mean that dark man?" queried the clerk.

"Yis, indade, I do!"

"Let me see, what was his name?"

Carney hesitated, but was she lost? People who hesitate always are, the proverb says. Not so with Carney.

"It's yersilf that has a right to know dhe name," she said. "What do ye kape a letther-office for, but to have all dhe names in creation afore yer very eyes?"

The clerk had found E. P. Hallowell's name by this time, down in the depths of a General Delivery memory, and turned to whirl one of the great revolving stands around until he came to *H.* It was easy enough then to find *Ha,* — and next *Hal.* That box was empty.

"No letters," he called out to Carney.

"Good-day to you, thin, and thank you."

The next day, and the next, and the next, Carney was at the window for her "master's" letters. Steadily the answer came, "No letters." But in a week there was a change. The clerk gave her a letter in a blue envelope. With haste she returned to "The Alderney," and knocked at Mr. Folliss's door.

"Misther Fully, wud ye do me a kindness? Tell me where is dhis letther from?" she asked.

She cunningly held her thumbs over the address, leaving Folliss nothing but the postmark and the stamp to look at.

"Hick — hick — o — ville, — must be Hickoryville, but it is very indistinct: the State mark is not readable. The letter is from the States, isn't it? Of course it is: that is a United-States stamp."

"An' where is dhat, Misther Fully?"

Folliss laughed, as he said, "I give it up, my good woman. Hickoryville is a very uncommon name, and I'm sure I never heard of the place before."

Carney put the letter into her pocket, and retired to her own quarters, where she sat cogitating, until the darkness reminded her of her evening duties in the halls below.

Carney was a logician only so far as cunning can be called coincident with that higher exercise of reason. Turn the facts over and over in her mind as she might, she could see but two of them with any clearness. First, Macrae was receiving letters at Toronto with regularity, probably once a week. Secondly, as the letters always looked alike, — she had noticed the color of the envelopes, — they must be from the same source always. Now, these letters might have reference to Ben, and they might not. "The might not" was so far away from Carney's thoughts, Macrae's crime so indelibly impressed upon her, that she leaped to the conclusion that he had Ben in keeping somewhere in the States, and that somewhere was — Hickoryville.

But the States were to Carney *terra incognita*, as far away practically as Africa, to be classed in her geography with Australia or India. Her reasoning, therefore, came to an end, very much like the road to Si Kimber's.

Not so her persistence, however. The very next week she was on the watch. Again came a letter, and Carney received it from the hands of the willing and unsuspecting clerk.

The next week came another. And Carney concealed and guarded the three treasures which had fallen into her hands, looking at them daily, as if they

might take voice, and tell her what she had not the power to extract from them.

The fourth week, — it was now the early part of March, — she appeared at the window again.

"Mr. Hallowell has been here himself," said the clerk. "And a precious row he kicked up too. What's the matter between him and 'the missus'?"

"Didn't I tell ye dhat she was just druv to death wid him?"

"He was pretty mad when I told him that you had taken out his letters; and you must not come any more. He has forbidden our giving letters to anybody but himself. So, if the letters are meant for your missus, tell her to have them directed to her."

"Thank you, sir: dhat I will."

Musing as to what step to take next, she set out for "The Prince of Cumberland House." Going through the public room, where men, for the most part ill-favored ones, sat drinking and talking, Carney entered a little sitting-room, affected of an evening by Mrs. Brannigan, the proprietress. Glancing about her, Carney saw that the room was occupied, not by her crony, as usual, but by two men, one of whom she recognized as Tim, Mrs. Brannigan's younger son, and the other, to her amazement, as Thomas Macrae.

Speech sometimes became impossible to Carney, but not for any great length of time. One minute of surprise sufficed on this occasion; and she burst upon the couple with the exclamation, —

"You here, Thomas Macrae?"

Macrae had merely looked at Carney as she entered:

thanks to her new bonnet and gown, and her generally bettered condition, he did not recognize her. But he was startled at the sound of her voice.

"What in — merciful goodness! Who are you?"

"Come out uv dhis, an' I'll tell you," she replied.

Macrae advanced and took her by the arm, looking her intently in the face, and saying in a low voice, "Carney, is this you? I thought you were in Arboe long ago, or at the bottom of the sea." And he laughed grimly.

"An' it's at the bottom uv the say ye wish I was now, isn't it? O Thomas Macrae! whisht! come out uv dhis, now. It's no place for you an' me to talk in. Come to dhe open street now."

"It's too cold. Say what you wish here."

"Dhen listen me; an' on your sowl, Thomas Macrae, answer me throoly." Lowering her voice she asked, —

"Where is Misther Binjamin?"

It was like a call to judgment. Macrae's blood ran hot and cold. But he was not the man to be taken in any snare of Carney Dugan's setting. Not he: he felt himself immeasurably superior to this poor woman — as who would not?

He looked loftily at her, — into her very eyes, — and laughed.

"Mr. Benjamin!" he exclaimed. "I had supposed he was forgotten long ago. The dead generally are."

"The dead?" repeated Carney. "Is Misther Binjamin dead?"

"Yes, and buried; and the mourning almost worn out, you foolish woman."

"Wan quistion more, then, Mr. Thomas: Where is Hickoryville?"

Macrae grasped her arm again in agitation.

"Where's what?" he cried. "You have been stealing my letters, then. Strange that I did not know enough to suspect it! That stupid clerk, with his nonsense about a servant and some anxious Mrs. Hallowell, threw me off the scent. Brannigan! here, what shall be done with a woman who steals your letters?"

"Give her to Jim Doris, the cop that walks this street, an' tell him it's wort' ten dollars to put her out of harm's way," replied the notorious scoundrel.

"I've a mind to do it," said Macrae.

"You — don't — dare, — Thomas Macrae," replied Carney. And the courage to do it oozed out of Macrae's very finger-ends.

"Come into the street, Carney: I want to talk with you," said Macrae. "Eight, Brannigan!"

"All right. Call it half-past," replied Tim.

Instinctively Carney bent her steps towards her own home; Macrae unconscious of this, and not caring either.

Carney was the first to speak. She had less need than her companion to plan and arrange her thoughts.

Solemnly she repeated her question, "Where is Misther Binjamin?"

"Dead, I told you."

"Who killed him?"

"Cock Robin, I shouldn't wonder."

"Thomas Macrae, — who — wint — to — Si Kimber's fur Misther Binjamin?"

"I did."

"You did?"

"Yes; and who failed to meet me at Quebec, as we agreed?" asked Macrae, assuming the aggressive.

"I did. An' not my fault aither, Misther Thomas. Dhey drugged me, dhey did, an' robbed me, an' put me in dhe jail."

"Oh! they did? And served you right for disobeying orders," said Macrae.

"That's neither here nor dhere, Misther Thomas. Are ye livin' in Taranta?"

"N—no." Macrae hesitated, thinking that it might be better to say "yes." But that would be perilous.

"N—no? Is dhat dhe way an honest man speaks? Thomas Macrae, it's written on yer face, an' on yer spache, dhat you're not telling dhe troot. What are you doin' wid Tim Brannigan?"

Pressed on every hand, Macrae waxed angry. In fury he cried out, "See here! old woman, all this is none of your business. You have no right to pry into my affairs in this fashion, and I warn you."

"Bad luck to yer warnin's, then, Misther Thomas. It's not Carney Dugan dhat cares dhe lift uv a finger for them. Maybe I'll go to warnin' and threatenin', meself. Don't be preachin' to me, now."

"Well, well, never mind, Mrs. Dugan," said Macrae. "I'll take it all back."

"Take it back!" answered Carney. "Ye'd betther take Misther Binjamin back, an' yer own honor, an' dhe good name ye're soilin'. Thomas Macrae, I've lived tree an' sixty years, an' manny's dhe man I seen

rooned an' rooned fur dhe love uv women. Have ye touched dhat Hartley lass?"

Macrae's face turned scarlet in an instant, but the night protected him. In a tone which could not deceive Carney, he pooh-poohed the very thought of touching the Hartley lass. But Carney took him up on the instant.

"Kape yer han's aff. You'll rue dhe day you touch her, even if it's at dhe very altar, an' if dhe praste blesses you dhere. Misther Binjamin will come back some day, an' she'll fly you out uv dhe house."

Carney came to a stop, as she finished this warning. They had reached King William Street, and in another moment turned into Princess Christina Street, and were at the doors of "The Alderney."

"You're not living here, are you?" asked Macrae.

"Indade, I am. An' a beautiful home it is; an' I've fine neighbors too. Will you come an' see me, Misther Thomas?"

"H'm!" he answered, "I think not. Now, see here! let me give you a piece of advice. Forget all about Mr. Ben: he's dead and buried, I tell you. And forget me too. At any rate, don't put yourself in my way."

Macrae tried to thrust money into Carney's hand, as he spoke. But she put it aside, saying, —

"Misther Thomas, I've money to lind, if you please. I'll none o' dhat."

A young man walked rapidly past as she was speaking, and entered the hall of the hotel.

"Who was that?" asked Macrae.

"Misther Fullis," answered Carney, completing that gentleman's name, and pronouncing it much more accurately than she ever did in his own presence.

"What! not Bly Folliss?"

"Dhe very same. Do you know him? I'll tell him you're here, Misther Thomas. It's good company you want, an' not Tim Brannigan's."

"For God's sake, Carney" — Macrae began. His quick intelligence placed a bar upon his tongue, however, and he left that sentence unfinished.

"I will call upon Mr. Folliss some time, Carney," he added. "And now let me ask one thing of you, Carney. My letters, — give them up!"

"Your letthers, Misther Thomas! Dhat's twic't you said dhat. Who has your letthers?"

"You!"

"Me! your letthers! Misther Thomas, I've ne'er a scrap nor tatter uv 'em."

And measurably this was true. The letters were that moment reposing in Mr. Bly Folliss's desk, wrapped in brown paper, and, for aught their custodian knew, might be handkerchiefs, or a parcel of diamonds. They were Mrs. Dugan's property, in his eyes, and nothing more.

Baffled, and fully comprehending that to ask again for the letters would be only to court a similar defeat, Macrae stood irresolute. Carney seized the occasion to say good-night, and left him, knowing that she would see Thomas Macrae again, and satisfied with the fact that she had shown him where to find her.

CHAPTER XXII.

ALMOST.

MACRAE remained a minute or two before "The Alderney," filled with perplexity.

"That cursed woman!" thought he. "Why isn't she feeding the cuttle-fish? She and Folliss will do me an injury yet. I've half a mind to give the whole thing up, go to Elmswoods, and tell the whole story, and try sea-water myself."

Although by nature afraid of few things, and certainly of no man's physical power, time had bred in Macrae a new kind of timorousness. He asked himself now what reliance could be placed upon Carney Dugan's tongue? What if she should reveal the past to Bly Folliss? What if she had already done so?

Then obstinacy came to his aid, the man's characteristic determination. "I won't give it up, not yet. I'll see Bly Folliss. I'll see the woman again, and I'll silence her too!" he exclaimed, with clinched teeth.

There was much to agitate this man to-night,—shapeless dangers in Carney's presence, in the possibilities which might spring from her, balanced only by the repeated assurance, in the past, of her reverence for his name, and a reliance upon the patent fact that she had really been faithful to him so far; a startling

spectre also of coming trouble which had risen out of the pages of the letter he had that day received from Dr. Peterson. Enough to make any man shake!

Macrae returned to Brannigan's, and while waiting for Tim read again this troublesome letter.

"We are sorry not to have heard from you." (Dr. Peterson was unwittingly galling his correspondent.) "The favorable symptoms mentioned in our previous letters continue. We hoped to have seen you a fortnight ago. . . . The time is not far distant when, in our judgment, it will be better to take your brother away, and give him the benefit of travel. . . . The last few days he has not been quite so well, but we regard that as of only temporary consequence."

Macrae groaned aloud as he read. And something must be done. If Ben should really recover, — ah! what then? The very thought made him eager to see Tim Brannigan, but when that pet of the police came in Macrae turned pale.

Feverishly within, but calmly enough in outward appearance, Macrae talked long with this man. They planned and bargained, disputed, haggled, agreed, hinted, misunderstood each other, went back again, and covered the ground of all their plotting a second, a third, a fourth time. It would sully these pages to write it out in detail.

At one o'clock Macrae arose. "Mind, now, — no violence," he said. "There is no necessity for that."

Next morning Macrae betook himself to "The Alderney." Bly Folliss was out. Macrae therefore slipped a card into Folliss's letter-box, saying to him-

self, "Just as well. I can see him next week. Now for the woman." But Carney was not to be found either.

The passage of the night had brought a re-action upon Macrae. His anxiety to see these two had given way to a semi-lethargic carelessness. Was it the symptom of despair, or of self-confidence? For a time he had been weighted with the conviction, not clearly shaped, but yet oppressing him, that these two held his fate in their hands. He had ranged them in the ranks of hostility; but now, in proportion as he saw them, in imagination, lifting their hands to deal the expected blow, he dully, lethargically, stupidly thrust Tim Brannigan before them to ward off the stroke.

There was growing up in him, in fact, a great reliance upon Brannigan: he admired certain fertile resources of mind and purpose displayed by him the previous evening.

And, thinking thus, Macrae's mind became clear again. Only one question remained, — should he go to Hickoryville at once, or not? Prudence answered "yes." On the other hand, that sentence in Dr. Peterson's letter — "The last few days he has not been quite so well" — suggested the safety of delay; and Macrae had reasons in plenty for listening to the suggestion.

This much settled, Macrae took the noon train for Millington. The dinner-hour found him in the drawing-room at Elmswoods. It was a delightful hour to Macrae. The faces of all the occupants of Elmswoods beamed upon him with a calm confidence. Even

Betty Hartley was unusually chatty and kind, and, when dinner was announced, took his arm with easy grace.

Mr. Hollins was grave, even constrained, all the time they were at table; but there was no mistaking the tone of his voice, the care he bestowed upon his guest's comfort, the satisfaction that dwelt upon his face as he looked at or spoke to Thomas Macrae.

The dinner over, this good man said openly, "Ladies, I have business with Thomas this evening: can you give us the library?"

What is coming now? thought Macrae. He went to the library, quaking, — not quite so strongly as on a former occasion, but enough to make him very wretched. Mr. Hollins did not speak at once. He walked the floor, after his manner; he sat at the desk, looking over a bunch of papers; he whirled the revolving chair half-way around, and beat a tattoo with his fingers upon the table.

Macrae pretended to read a newspaper, meanwhile; but telegrams and editorials were all one to him. It seemed as if the first were all dated at Hickoryville, and announced the immediate departure of Ben Hallowell, George Hallowell, Ben Hollins, for Millington; and as if, in the second, the editor was expending all the powers of language to expatiate upon "the enormous crime of Thomas Macrae." He was flushed with such thoughts and imaginings; and, when Mr. Hollins at last spoke, Macrae started in his seat as if a judge had commanded him to stand up, and say, "Guilty, or not guilty."

"Thomas," said Mr. Hollins, "I have received to-day from my counsel the papers which I laid before you six months ago. Our signatures will make you full partner in 'Hollins and Son.' You still have time to withdraw, if you have any reason to be dissatisfied."

"I have none," Macrae almost gasped.

"You will remember that I gave my son a quarter of the capital. I wish this to remain intact, as I said before. I have now arranged to bequeath it to Miss Hartley. I cannot forget, that, in two days more, she would have been Ben's wife. I am only recognizing her rights, therefore."

"Very true, sir, and very right," said Macrae.

"You may take the papers, then, and look them over again at your own convenience. I am ready to sign whenever you are."

A thought came to Macrae. "To-day," said he, "is the 2d of March. Sentiment is not business; but Monday week, the 13th of March, is my birthday. Could we not execute these papers then?"

"Just as you prefer, my dear fellow. And now, Thomas, I have something else to say. Perhaps I may shock you."

"Danger again!" thought Macrae. "Will he tell me now, that Ben is coming home, partially restored, and that I am to run the risk of no man can tell what?"

"Perhaps it is an old man's whim, Thomas," continues Mr. Hollins; "but I have had an impression, growing daily in my mind, and these legal papers have given it shape. I am on delicate ground, I know,

Thomas. Forgive me if I am too blunt. It grieves me to look at Betty, and see her wasting all her sweet young life. I thought to see her my son's wife, and the mother of his children. But God has willed otherwise; and I would like to see her well married."

He stopped, perforce. The tears came, and a thousand memories with them. He sobbed as only a disappointed old man can, every gasp testifying to the wound in his heart.

Macrae could not have interposed a word, had his will to do so been ever so good. He could only sit and wait, looking into the fire, and wondering, until his aged friend grew calm again, and said, —

"I have seen in your face, and in your attentions to Betty, Thomas, that you are interested in her. I know nothing of her feelings; but I have asked myself many times, what could be more natural than that you two should build up a household together? You are to be partners in one sense: why not in another?"

Macrae was overcome. Such complete fatherly confidence made a boy of him. He unfolded the story of his love for Betty, dating its beginning at Nuremberg, depicting his grief when Ben secured the prize he longed for, justifying himself, too, by asking Mr. Hollins to bear witness against him if he had ever heard one word from his lips in derogation of Betty's choice. It was music sweet to player and listener alike.

"But what shall I do?" he asked. "I fear to speak: I dread a refusal. I may shock her, and set her against me forever."

"In for a penny, in for a pound," saith a wicked old proverb, sometimes used in a good cause and by good men.

"How would it do, Thomas, for me to speak to Mrs. Hartley on the subject?" asked the elder conspirator.

"If you would, sir," answered the younger: "nothing would please me better. I have no fondness for sentimentalism," — a pretty broad statement on the heels of the birthday matter, but wrung from Macrae by circumstances, — "and, if I am not mistaken, Miss Betty will look at the matter practically. If an understanding could be partially reached between you and Mrs. Hartley, perhaps the rest would follow. I shall look upon you as a father, sir, if you will permit me."

Oh, ice! ice! ice! There was not a ray of warm spring sunshine in such love as this. The older man could not perceive the twistings and windings of the younger one's thoughts. He was in the dark. He was an inert mass of steel. He placed himself in the furnace of good feeling, of kindly, fatherly interest. He tempered himself, when well heated, with the dropping of his own tears, and passed himself over to Macrae's hands, — a tool. And did this one scruple to use him? Not for an instant. His joy was unbounded. He left the house, and out under the stars gave vent to his excitement which stifled him within doors. He hugged himself, admired himself. He drew gorgeous pictures of coming events, and applying the mentoscope to his little world beheld it magnified to the dimensions of a universe, himself its sun;

men, women, and children its planets; Ben Hollins a comet wandering in space, in an eccentric orbit, and visible almost never.

Something whispered in his ear. Perhaps it was only the frosty limb of an elm creaking softly; but it seemed to say, "Yes, yes, marry the girl you love, Thomas Macrae, and then come down here! We devils all had our own way up there. There's many a sl"— The sound died away, leaving Macrae cold and shivering.

But as the town lights came in plainer view he gathered new courage, and struck his breast a sounding blow, saying, "No slip for you, my boy! The cup and the lip are close together now, and I can foretaste the ambrosial drink. I've waited long and patiently, Betty Hartley! Pour on, good people up at Elmswoods! You are mixing liquor of the gods for me. Pour faster: I can drink!"

Being so inclined to metaphor, the wonder is that Macrae did not go on, and call to mind the well-known fact, that people who drink so copiously sometimes trip over a pebble or a chip, and, falling, break their precious necks.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SYMPOSIA.

WE hurry along now, for matters are approaching a crisis. On the strength of letters from "E. P. Hallowell," Dr. Peterson decides that this shall be Ben's last week at Hickory Hall. Carney Dugan is working herself up to action; and this, therefore, is the last week of her hesitation and blundering. It is the last week of Thomas Macrae's eager anticipations; the last week, also, of mourning for the dead at Elmswoods.

Do not conclude that Ben was well. Dr. Peterson's letter to the fictitious Mr. Hallowell has sufficiently set forth his real condition. He was only *getting well;* and there had come to Ben, as to many patients of his class, a time when the physician judged that his cure would be hastened by contact with the every-day world. Ben had given the doctor, of late, many detached fragments of his own history. No one at Hickory Hall could put them together: there was no one to verify them. In the night he sometimes moaned, and talked in his sleep. The burden of his dream could not be defined by the watchful attendant, but he reported the words Ben uttered to the doctor.

"Betty," Ben said on one such occasion, "you're

surely not going to leave me! Tom is taking me away. He talks of ships. We travel by rail night and day: we are going far off. Don't let him take me, Betty! The cars are all burning — the sky, the fields, the woods, the road! Let us run, Betty, run — run!"

Half the patients in the ward are wakened by Ben's loud cry. The attendant finds him sitting up in bed, frightened and quaking.

"What is the matter, Ben?" he asks.

"Well, I'm sure I don't know," answers the poor fellow. "Some one was making a thundering noise, I should say. It has given me a headache."

There are to be festivities at Hickory Hall this week. The three magnates have held a consultation upon Ben's case; and as he has failed to run down as rapidly as they prognosticated, and positively declines to show a single symptom of "n'ger'l p'resis," they have sagely concluded that Ben will not stay much longer. Their lengthy experience has qualified them to judge of these matters, and they frequently foretell the departure of a patient before the attendants even have an inkling of it.

Delorme is inspired to give Ben a send-off. Official permission is obtained; and immediately after breakfast, on Monday, March 6, the atmosphere is full of mystification. Delorme is hurrying to and fro. He makes a trip to the town, and returns laden with packages. All day Sunday he had been laboring with pen and ink; and now he receives an oblong bundle, evidently from the printer. He shuts himself up, — locks

himself in, in fact, — and receives buckets of hot water, and buckets of cold, through the smallest possible opening of the door, following this up with a clatter of dishes marvellously exciting to the curiosity of the patients.

Seven o'clock comes, and Delorme stands at his door garbed in his best. His gigantic figure, his white hair, his beardless face, pale and almost womanly, his long white hands, his lame foot, enveloped in one towel more than usual, his enormous white cravat, present a picture well worth seeing. His eyes are anxiously fixed upon the hall-door. The knob turns at last, and Matron Barmore appears with two of the lady patients. Delorme greets them most graciously, opens his door, bows them in, returns to the hall, and locks the ladies up. There is hospitality for you!

Presently four others come, for whom Delorme performs the same ceremonies. As each guest enters, she hands a ticket to the host, of which the following is a fac-simile, except in this particular, that it is partly printed, partly written: —

DELORME'S PARTY. *Bill of Fare presented separately.*

March 2.

Admit Miss Skipkins *not transferable*

+++ P. M. D.

The lady guests all secured, Delorme hobbles off to Ben's room, and calls out, —

"Come, doctor! the party is all ready."

"Oh, yes!" answers Ben: "all ready. I'm all ready."

Delorme escorts Ben gravely to the scene of festivity. At the door, he asks, —

"Where's your ticket, doctor?"

The attendant has taken care of that, and produces the cabalistic card. Delorme's key clicks in the lock, and Ben is ushered into a scene of unparalleled grandeur. On the mantle, on the book-case, and on the toilet-stand, are at least a dozen colored wax candles. Flowers, too, are scattered about the room in graceful shapes. This last explains a visit made by Matron Barmore in the afternoon.

In the centre of the room is a long table with a white cloth alone visible upon it, but the undulations and protuberances of this cloth indicate the presence of dishes beneath. Never was there a feast before, at which the removal of the cloth was the first thing on the programme. Here the possibility of such an improvement in social customs was established, and Delorme gloried in it.

The cloth removed, the luxuries of many climes and countries lay bare to the gaze of the wondering but silent guests.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, — at least, there's one gentleman," — said Delorme; "and I don't know that I introduced Dr. Ben to you, did I, ladies? Well, never mind it now: it's too late to go back so far. If we go on that way, we shall never get to eating; and I confess I am very anxious to begin. I couldn't go to tea this evening: so I propose we begin."

Delorme now opens the package from the printer's. It contains at least a hundred copies of the following: —

HALF PAST SEVEN HIS ROOM.

NOT HIS BIRTHDAY.

Party.

SALMON.	APRICOTS.
PINE-APPLE.	PRESERVES.
OYSTERS.	SARDINES.
CAKES.	BON BONS.
MERINGUES.	MOTTOES.
PICKLES.	ORANGES.
BISCUITS.	LEMONADE.
CHERRIES.	LOBSTER.
CANDY.	CRACKERS.
RAISINS.	FRUIT.
CHOCOLATE.	FIGS.

NORTH WING, MARCH 2.

HICKORY HALL.

Having given one of these enticing bills of fare to each of his guests, the host addresses the company as follows: "Ladies and — Dr. Ben, I have put down the refreshments in the order I like them best. If

any one prefers a different arrangement, I hope you will make yourselves perfectly at home."

An hour is now spent in the most delightful social intercourse. Do you ask whether this intercourse consisted solely in an exhibition of the gastronomic qualities of the host and his guests? No: there was an uninterrupted fire of conversation, quite as rational, if you please, as you would hear in any drawing-room.

Half-past eight was the limit of time set for Delorme's party. Punctually the matrons bundled up their charges; and thankful good-nights were exchanged. "The party" was over; and Delorme, tired out, and with the sweet consciousness of having executed a hospitable duty, went to bed under the table, as gentlemen sometimes do in the sane world.

Please accept next an invitation to tea with some of the convalescent patients. The day shall be Tuesday, the day after Delorme's party. You shall not meet a great crowd of unkempt creatures, a rioting, growling, dangerous company. On the contrary, please to imagine, first, a dining-room about the size of your own; secondly, a family of eleven persons; for it is the family idea, not the hotel or prison idea, which prevails at Hickory Hall.

The men do not come in at sound of the bell with absolutely military precision. Some are quite dilatory; but as there are reasons for this, as you shall presently see, we make no circumstance of that.

The first to answer the bell — for that matter, he has been pacing the hall for ten minutes, eagerly awaiting the summons — is Biddle, one of the great trio.

He scurries up to his place at the head of the table, the seat of honor, his by right of many years sojourn at Hickory Hall. Do not think of saying, "Biddle, may you live to be the head of this family twenty years longer!" For you will drive the good humor out of Biddle's face with such a wish. He will leave the table and his untouched food, and cry out, "My God! is it not enough? I would like to die to-night."

Why? Because he is at Hickory Hall? No; but because the outside world is closed to him. At Hickory he has his pass-key: he goes out and comes in at his own will. If he chooses to go to the town, or to roam across country in the woods and fields, he is at perfect liberty so to do. His days pass happily and comfortably. But send him a hundred miles away, and you have transformed him in a day to an object of pity. Never mind the reasons and causes of this: such is the fact. Hickory Hall is home for Biddle.

His silvery hair, with curling ends, his big eyes, his nervous manner, his intelligent speech despite the peculiarity of intonation which makes "n'ger'l p'resis" of "general paresis," have led many a visitor to ask, "Who is he?" In truth, that often useless question is very frequently asked at Hickory Hall by persons from the outside world; and the answer, "Smith of New York," is explicit enough. When the world rids itself of some of its wise saws, and learns the foolishness of saying, "Once insane, always insane," and of holding the unfortunate in abhorrence, these precautions will be laid aside.

Next to Biddle is seated "Johnny." "Johnny" is

a peculiar young fellow, — a good business man in the even years, a denizen of Hickory Hall in the odd ones. As he grows older, perhaps he will stay out longer, until some day Hickory Hall will say "Farewell to thee, Johnny!" forever; and he will settle down into a steady, undisturbed life. Perhaps so, perhaps not. Alas! that science cannot speak more positively of cases of his class.

Perhaps you think that Biddle and "Johnny" give weight to the "once insane, always insane," theory. There are exceptions to all rules. And the strangest feature of all is, that, when at Hickory Hall, these two are *not insane.*

But look at this frank-faced, gentlemanly neighbor of Johnny's. A fortnight ago it required two keepers to prevent Mr. Dock from splitting his head open against the walls. He ate buttons and pins surreptitiously. Clothing and bedding were obnoxious to him. To-day he goes where he pleases; he reads the newspapers; he plays anybody, patient or visitor, a game of billiards, with a discount. In a few weeks you will find him at his business again, — writing great piles of letters, directing the movements of an office-full of clerks.

This timid little man next to Dock is poor Payson, — also of the Dominion. He is convalescent, he is going to get well. You do not believe it? This shrinking, trembling creature, begging the attendant to take him away from the table and lock him up, whispering to each new-comer that "Merry" is looking for an opportunity to kill him, — he recover?

Certainly. Please do not speak to him, nor look at him long: it will cost him unimaginable suffering. Payson's silver flute is in the office. The day he asks for it, the day he can be prevailed upon to break its silence, Payson will bid farewell to a host of murderous creatures of the imagination; his wife will be sent for; they will play and sing "Home, sweet home;" he will grow bright and happy, will chat and smile as gayly as any of you. Science has probed such cases pretty deeply, simply because they present less difficulties than some others; and it speaks with confidence.

What is the matter to-night with Mr. Ball, Payson's left-hand neighbor? He is weeping bitterly. He rises; and as he goes into the hall we hear him say to the remonstrating attendant, "I can't eat; I *must* leave this house. All those men know my thoughts; and I think of so many awful, horrible things, — things which I never dreamed of or heard of before, — that I know the gentlemen despise me. I am ashamed to look them in the face." Perhaps you can imagine what this man suffers.

Delorme, whose seat is next, looks upon Mr. Ball's departure as a relief. He came to the supper-table loaded with remains of last night's "party." Now he has room to spread his multitudinous dishes over a greater range of table. Biddle roars with laughter at the mass of pickled oysters, canned salmon, raisins and cakes. But that placid countenance shows no sign of resentment. Delorme's silvery voice only responds, "You may laugh, Biddle, all you like; but I

wish you to understand that I can't eat this corn-bread. I've always been accustomed to *high living*, and need something *delicate*." Many years has Delorme been "accustomed" to the corn-bread of Hickory Hall; but memory makes light of that, and carries Delorme back to a remoter period, when as boy and man he had actually tasted the fare of more than one lordly table in Europe, and had held his own with titled men and dames, with diplomats and rulers.

We are at the foot of the table now, and here is a character. Mr. Hommeau is of French descent, to judge by his name. The patients have given him the *sobriquet* of "Man-afraid-to-speak." To judge by this, he might be an Ojibway or a Sioux. He is as grim and silent as the traditional red-man, at all events.

One remark, however, Hommeau makes on all occasions. The injunctions or requests, "Come to breakfast," "Come to dinner," "Take your bath," "Get up," "Go to bed," "Come out and take a walk," all are answered in the one phrase, — "I don't want to." Put him in the bath, and he will splash all day long, if you have a mind to leave him there. Ask him to come out and dress, and he will reply, "I don't want to."

Once seated at the table, after a long fight with the attendant, — who pulls, pushes, leads, coaxes, cajoles, commands, entreats by turns, but always gently and patiently, frequently laughing at the absurdity of the whole performance, — Hommeau is offered bread, tea, coffee, butter, preserves, and cakes; but pushes each

article away with the continual protest, "I don't want any."

"Come, drink this tea," says the attendant.

"I don't want to."

"You must."

"I sha'n't."

"Well, don't, then. Don't eat a thing!" says the attendant, with a laugh.

Forthwith the unhappy man falls to, and eats ravenously.

This man has no inclination to violence, but the scowl of everlasting protest upon his face almost sends Mr. Payson into fits. And this protest is Hommeau's symptom. He carries it into every thing, and defeat disgusts him. Every night of his life he protests even against going to bed; and, once there, vows not to go to sleep. But the "sweet restorer" steals over him; and as Hommeau feels himself going, and as a last protest for that cycle, he rolls over, cries out, "O Gosh!" — and slumbers.

Slowly, and with an aspect of such inexpressible suffering that it brings the tears to your eyes to look at him, little Schmidt enters the dining-room. He has been hanging back, standing at the door for five minutes. Some one, either an attendant or a fellow-patient, goes out to him, and invites him in.

"No," replies Schmidt, "I cannot. I cannot eat. I haf no money. I could not pay for my supper."

We change the current of Schmidt's thoughts. We walk him down the hall, and at the farther end say to him, as a business friend might say in Broad

Street, at the hour when the business hive pours out its bees, —

"Come, Schmidt, come over and take supper with me this evening." An image of Montague Street, or Grace Court perhaps, springs up in Schmidt's mind; and he walks more lightly — not with alacrity, however — to the supper-table.

Look out! here comes an avalanche, the lightning express, or a tornado! What is this rush? Oh! only Ben, Doctor Ben. Until he has passed the door, you would suppose that two persons are coming. But it is only Ben, holding an animated conversation with himself. He comes in with flying colors. Ten minutes ago he was scrupulously arrayed. Now he has hastily made an additional toilet for tea, by letting loose cravat, waistcoat, and cuffs, and fluffing up his red hair, until he has the appearance of a very busy bandit.

"Good-evening, Ben!" says some one.

"Oh, good-evening, to be sure, ha, ha! What's the matter with *you?*"

"What's the news, Ben?"

Up into the air goes a spoonful of fried potatoes, down comes the spoon with a clatter, over goes the butter-dish into Delorme's lap, and Ben whisks his coat-collar around his ears, exclaiming to his female tormentress, "Now, don't you do that again, I tell you!"

Delorme looks up in an injured fashion, saying, "Well, Ben, I should say as much: don't you do that again. This is about the two-hundredth time you've spoiled my pants."

But Ben's little crisis has passed. He surveys the slight ruin he has created, and blushes with regret, offering profuse apologies, and saying, "All right, Delorme: come over to — what's the name of this place, now? — and I'll fit you out."

Seated next to Ben is the inventor of the chevalocope. He is giving the patients the eighty-first part of a lecture on the "*Preservation of Health*." His topic for to-night is "Tea as a Preservative." He illustrates his discoveries. "Gentlemen, please observe: I place in this cup of tea, one teaspoonful of salt," — suiting the action to the word, — "next a lump of butter, then a little mustard, a tablespoonful of sugar, cream according to taste, and lastly the skin of this baked potato. Ah! you have to eat *fried* potatoes, the rest of you, don't you? Well, I don't eat such truck as that. — Here! George, take this tea out. It tastes like thunder, literally."

Last of all comes "The Major." Major Fisher, magnate, *facile princeps* of the trio. The Major is general forager for the convalescents' ward No. 1. In spring and autumn are owing to him many dainty dishes of trout and perch caught with his own hands; in summer, scores of luscious melons, and pocketfuls of smaller fruits, gathered anywhere within a radius of twenty miles. In September and October, the dinner-table is graced with steaming dishes of that delicious, but in this country not half-appreciated, fungus, the *Agaricus campestris*, and often of other edible varieties of the mushroom.

The Major knows everybody — townspeople, farm-

ers, and navigators — for miles and miles about. He can talk of business matters, he can advise on agricultural affairs, he can teach a surveyor how to set his theodolite, he can mount a locomotive and instruct the engineer. And not with crazy talk, not with nonsense.

Let me whisper this to you. The Major has in his day done some mighty works, built bridges which are now renowned; he has laid out railroads which are now paying seven per cent "dividends," and nobody knows how much per cent in "additional stock" and other little devices for evading the law and making fortunes.

Why is he not in his place? you ask. Because he is better off in Hickory Hall. Is he content? Measurably, yes. Generally, yes. At times he burns to go out again in jack-boots, and plunge into the woods and swamps, directing a thousand men where and how to set ties and lay rails; but he shakes his head, says, "No, that's all over for me," and goes to assorting his last find of shells and minerals.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A MERE PEEP AT DR. PETERSON'S PHILOSOPHY.

WHILE we are at Hickory Hall, we may as well make a day of it; and, having looked in at the patients in the dining-room, we will go next to the doctor's office, which has attractions of another kind.

Chiefest of all these is Dr. Peterson himself. In the prime of life, in good health, — as a doctor, of all men, ought to be, — of a cheerful disposition and gentlemanly manners, kindly in speech and act, Dr. Peterson secures our respect and good-will at once. Of the patients, he obtains even better interest on his excellent capital; for, except in rare instances, they *love* the doctor warmly.

Dr. Peterson is not at all given to boasting. The atmosphere of his office is not heavy with promises. He feels that he is stationed at Hickory Hall to do a certain work. He is in no hurry to proclaim that such a work can be done with mechanical precision.

Is he, then, a mere empiric? Are all these patients, these living men and women, committed to his care, only so many alembics or crucibles, into which he is to pack or pour crude materials, mumbling over them a jargon of witch-words, and watching the passage of minutes and seconds, in expectancy of some marvel-

lous transmutation of insanity to soundness? If he were, it would be well to keep clear of Dr. Peterson. As he is not, it is a good thing to fall into Dr. Peterson's hands, — that is to say, if you happen to be in need of him; from which, after all, may God preserve you! Amen.

While we are visiting him, a carriage stops at the office-door. There is a sound of weeping in the doctor's private reception-room; a tremulous female voice quavers up and down the gamut of question, entreaty, caution, and plain information. A little eaves-dropping is justifiable on this occasion. We can hear every word.

"Please, doctor," says the trembling voice, "please don't punish my daughter severely."

"Punish her, madam?" responds the doctor. "What shall I punish her for? Shall I put her under the shower-bath, and let the water drip, drip, drip, upon her poor head, until she curses man and God, and falls down dead? No, madam, we are not brutes at Hickory Hall. Or shall I put her in a dark dungeon, under ground, and feed her with food which the very rats will snatch out of her hands? Madam, we are not scoundrels here. Or shall I whip this girl? O God! what pity that innocence and beauty should come to such a pass! Shall I prick and prod her sweet young flesh with goads? Madam, we are not devils."

"Oh, no, doctor! I beg your pardon. But it would break my heart if the poor child was to suffer unnecessarily. For two years we have kept her at home,

for very fear of sending her to an asylum, and because we know that such dreadful things happen in these institutions."

"You know it, do you? And how, pray? From the newspapers! Alas, madam! perhaps you and they have cause. I have nothing to say on that point. But let me tell you, you have lost two precious years. I will not harass you; but it is my duty to say that to-day your daughter might have been at home with you, gladdening your hearts. But there, never mind that! Leave your daughter here, in perfect confidence. Come with me to the ward."

A half-hour afterwards that same voice is heard bidding the doctor good-night. The trembling and sorrow of it are gone; it has become firm; and there is even a sound as of a gentle, rippling laugh, at some sally of the doctor's, as she enters the carriage again.

The doctor returns to us with a smiling face. "One more cure," he says, "to the credit of Hickory Hall!"

"A cure!"

"Decidedly. One of the banes of this hospital life is the ignorance and prejudice of the people. Think of that woman keeping her daughter under lock and key two whole years, because she had heard that patients were whipped and pounded and showered, and mercy knows what!"

"But, doctor, you do not deny that there is some foundation for these feelings."

"No, I do not deny it; and I hate the very mention of such facts, quite as bitterly as any one else. The physician who admits such elements into his treatment

of the insane ought to be stripped of his diploma; and an attendant guilty of the barbarities which have been thrust into the history of insanity should be hung by the heels. There! would you express the case in any stronger words? But, gentlemen and ladies, I have ceased, long ago, to be at all actuated by my feelings on this matter. This is the first time I have uttered such sulphuric language in many years. Early in my practice my indignation was aroused, and I determined to do what I could for the insane. It has been terribly up-hill work, I can tell you."

"You lack public sympathy?"

"Do you not see for yourselves that the public is still sleeping? A certain amount of the old barbarity is laid aside, — yes. But the public must still have its dens for the incarceration of the pauper insane; and many a patient far above the pauper class finds himself thrust in there, also, through the meanness of relatives and the indifference of officials."

"Is there any way of reaching such a state of things?"

"No way but to educate the public sentiment. The newspapers touch it up now and then. I can hardly think this is done merely for the sake of item-hunting. On the contrary, some one's sensibilities have been touched. It may be only the reporter's, or the reporter may chance to represent the feelings and opinions of a greater or smaller constituency. I like to read what they write, therefore; and I can tell you that they get very close to the truth sometimes."

"The politicians are against you, then?"

"The politicians! They neither know nor care enough about it to be either for or against us. Their man, Rafferty or Schlaeger, must have a place; and these inhuman offices are numerous, and just the thing. For my part, I wish the politicians would give these henchmen each a beer-corner or a groggery instead, and let them scatter death in that fashion, rather than as keepers of the insane. For the amount of liquor to be sold and consumed will aggregate about the same, and it is a minor question whether it be sold in one thousand places or two thousand."

"Do you find, doctor, that public sentiment is becoming enlightened?"

"Measurably, yes. The revealed horrors of the past, however, have still their hold upon many minds. Probably the majority of even intelligent people would be quite as much astonished at the interior of Hickory Hall as this lady who has just left her daughter here. What do you think she asked me? With the tears rolling down her cheeks, she asked if she could rely upon our letting her know at once, if her daughter *died under treatment*."

"That is downright absurdity."

"Not a whit more absurd than a thousand other questions which are asked here. She was astonished when I proposed that she should come here once a week, or once a month, at her own convenience, and see for herself whether her daughter was alive."

"To change the subject a little, doctor. Are such institutions as yours growing in public favor?"

"Slowly, but surely. It takes time to bring about such wide-sweeping changes in public opinion. But the time is coming when the people will cease to be under the control of bugaboos. Your question leads me to express an opinion here, which I beg you to consider. As matters stand to-day, hundreds hesitate and delay to send the afflicted to the only places where they can be intelligently treated and cured; that is, if cure be possible. And this for more reasons than one. First, because of their fears for the unfortunate, their fear that he will be abused and maltreated; secondly, because a ridiculous public sentiment still insists upon branding the restored patient, as if he had been serving out a sentence. You see, the old idea, the criminal idea, the prison idea, still lingers in men's minds. Hundreds of valuable lives are lost, and the maniac wards are twice as full as they need be, simply because friends of the unfortunate postpone and delay action, until the victim is at his worst."

"Well, doctor, if I ever discover a sign of insanity in myself, I shall certainly turn my footsteps in the direction of Hickory Hall."

"Not quite so soon as that, my friend. There are signs of insanity in all of us. My good old friend Dr. Bushwick of Springfield, as honest a practitioner as ever lived, held the view you have just pronounced; and I verily believe he would have liked to send all Springfield here, from the mayor down. I said to him once, 'Doctor, you are positively insane on the subject of insanity.'"

At this point, a dignified, sweet-faced lady of fifty

years enters, and makes an announcement to Dr. Peterson.

"This is our evening," he remarks, turning to us, "of etiquette. In other words, we are to have a social gathering in the parlors. Will you give us your company?"

"With pleasure," we answer; and these formal words, for once, turn out to have some literal, honest meaning.

We find the piano open, card-tables set, *tête-à-têtes* and chairs arranged in groups, flowers from the doctor's greenhouses tastefully arranged in vases.

The company begins to enter, — first a silent lady, a very vivacious and sparkling one, a timid young man, a consequential old one.

Then "Merry" stalks through the doorway, in full expectation of the honors of the evening. He extends his hand with a magnificent air to Miss Bogrand, chief matron, saying, "Your servant, madam, Marshal of the" — "Merry's" limbs are not prepared for this: perhaps they were braced up only to the level of the mayoralty of Albany, and not strongly enough for the marshalship of New York. He sways for an instant, his arms cleave the air, and "Merry" goes down in a heap.

Never mind! While "Merry" is picking himself up, we look the other way, — at this sweet, bright, engaging face which stands framed in the entrance. Its possessor has held court in as stately halls and drawing-rooms as ever you waltzed and promenaded in. She is nameless now, for a time. Why? Because

stupid people and malicious people would delight to whisper and pick at her when she returns to the outer world. At present they only envy her, because they believe her to be living luxuriously, and enjoying a trip up the Nile or in the Holy Land. Stupid people!

Here comes dear Mrs. Oomooriah! Forty years of service in heathen countries, a year or two of simple, gentle weariness at Hickory Hall, possibly a little period of clear vision, and then an eternity of angelic wisdom in the kingdom of God, — this is an epitome of Mrs. Oomooriah's past, present, and future. Hard work and the broiling sun of Cathay's plains have turned her from the path of health for a little while. Brand thee, good woman! The man who would do that should be branded with hot iron after the fashion of the rough old times whose notions he clings to with such tenacity, and should walk the streets with the word "Fool" upon his forehead, — if it be lawful to apply that word to any human being.

Sprightly Miss Fort has also arrived, with her sister, who is visiting her. Seventeen long years has she been afflicted. Strangely enough, of late she has raved little: she has awaked to realities. Queer ways she has yet, but on the whole she is vastly changed for the better. The doctor and her sister have a scheme for this evening. Miss Fort is to be invited to play. Once she was the best performer in C——.

Miss Fort receives the proposal doubtfully; but her sister quietly suggests that they play one of Mozart's sonatas, in *duo*, and her eye lights up gladly.

"Which one?" she exclaims, brightening. "Let us play the third in F."

Memory is a marvellous engine. Here we count it a wonder that it should leap over seventeen years: in eternity it will traverse thousands.

Miss Fort looks over the notes, changes her mind, and declares for Mozart's first, his symphony in D. In an instant she is seated at the piano, whereat the doctor's eye glistens.

"Will you play *primo*, dear?" asks the sister.

"Yes."

She strikes the opening chord of the *allegro* somewhat hesitatingly; but the first chords inspire her. She rings out the theme with its gradual *crescendo*, giving its last triumphal notes firmly and powerfully. She sinks to the soft reply, that strain which seems like the singing of hymns in a castle-chapel by mothers and wives and daughters, while their knights are doing battle in the plain below. Then the burst of another *forte* passage follows, sounding like a cry from the field; then a measured strain, as of men marching slowly through the castle-gate, victors, but burdened with their dead and dying; a strain of triumph and thanksgiving; a *crescendo* of jubilee; a *piano* of wailing from the widows and fatherless. Now sounds again a trumpet-call to muster; again that same hymn before the altar in the castle chapel; then the *andante*, a solemn, stately strain, calling to mind mailed men and veiled women going forth to pay the last rites to those who died for glory and honor; and, last of all, the *allegro molto* of final joy and triumph.

These made up a picture of sound which set Miss Fort's face ablaze with enjoyment and inspiration. Mozart himself had more than once acted more like a madman than did Miss Fort.

But, alas! we have no record of Mozart's swinging himself up to the top of the piano, after a performance, and dangling his feet there. This is what Miss Fort did, and Ben is greatly amused. He quickly makes a motion as if to give her the benefit of his phrenological skill; but Miss Fort repels him proudly, saying, "You are not my barber, sir!"

"Oh! very well, then," replies Ben; and suggests, quite mildly and forgivingly, that she had better take two gallons of whiskey and four ounces of quinine before breakfast.

Some one strikes up some fair quadrille music now, — possibly the Lancers, — and sets are formed.

"Come, 'Merry,' take a partner," says the doctor.

The deepest of basses replies, "Ex — cuse me, doctor. When I was marshal, I was the best dancer on Manhattan Island. Oh, pshah! you ought to have seen me dance! But my *teeth* are out of order now."

The dance goes on, however, without "Merry;" and a lively, though very orderly, exercise they make of it.

Whist and euchre come in for a share of the flying hours; and lively tongues discuss the events of Hickory Hall, and of the world at large. The doctor mingles freely with his patients, not solely for social purposes, but for medical as well. In point of fact, these social gatherings in the parlors are not unimportant test occasions.

On the present occasion, not a few of the patients hold their own the entire evening without one lapse. Generally their conversation is quite rational. Our Ben is uncommonly fluent and clear. You could turn him off the track easily enough, as Miss Fort did for a moment. But hold him to some rational subject, in a rational way, and Ben can talk as well as most men.

"Where did you say your home was, Mr. Hallowell?" asks one of the ladies. Ben is off the track immediately. Memory has not perfected her work in him yet. So he replies, "Well, now, it was in a mill, I'm positive. Betty and Tom and I lived there."

"In a mill?" asks the doctor. "Wasn't it Millville?"

"No: it sounds like that too." Ben was struggling now with memory. Let the fight go on. He rises, and paces the room a turn or two. Returning, he takes the doctor by both arms, gazes into his face earnestly, and cries trembling, "Do you know where Millington is?"

"No; but I will find out for you, Ben."

This satisfies the poor fellow, and he becomes perfectly calm again.

Off the track! Yes: the bewildered eye, the flushing cheek, the expanding nostril, the opening and closing hand, were evidence of that. But memory had given a fierce pull; and Ben was on the track again, if not wholly, then at least to the extent of one wheel.

For the perfection of the work, Nature and Science

are now working hand in hand. The deluding times when the one sought to invoke the other's aid with all manner of mouthings, with childish witchcraft, swinging of censers, counting of beads, triangulation of stars, and the mixing of blood of newts and new-born babes; the times also, when Nature, good, true, faithful Nature, hung aloof from such Science, falsely so-called, — are passed.

Science is content now to be the pupil of Nature, and does not seek to be an old woman riding upon a broomstick, sweeping cobwebs out of the sky. And how much better for Science! How much better for Nature! How much better for man!

CHAPTER XXV.

BLY FOLLISS'S PARLORS.

IN the parlor of Mr. Bly Folliss's suite at The Alderney, on Wednesday morning, March 8, were three gentlemen, — Mr. Folliss, Germaine Parson, and John — commonly called Jack — Brandon.

The room, a rather luxuriously furnished one, presented an aspect not exactly of confusion, but certainly not of order. An easel, with big, sprawling legs, but supporting a superb Verboeckhoven, had been set aside, as far as possible, in a corner. Books, drawing-tools, sketches, brushes, tubes, pitchers, glasses, cigar-boxes, pipes, and all the litter, useful, ornamental, and pestiferous, of a bachelor's living-room, lay scattered about. In the centre of the room were four or five boxes half covered with foreign, steamship, and railway labels and marks, — to a sort of ceremonial opening of which Mr. Bly Folliss had invited his two bosom friends.

Left an orphan almost the very day he attained his majority, and receiving a fortune at his mother's death, Bly Folliss had never found a place in the working world; and domestic life had as yet been unattractive to him. The money he would have "squandered in business," as he expressed it (and probably with quite

as much truth as metaphor), or would have spent upon a wife, Mr. Folliss had to rid himself of in other ways; and, to his credit be it said, not a pound of it went to the fostering or increase of this world's vices and miseries.

Folliss's friend, Germaine Parson, on the other hand, had a bare competence, and with this was pursuing a thorough course of scientific study. Some day *Professor* Parson will be heard of, unless character and diligence count for nothing.

It was Folliss's delight to spend his money upon his friends. The arrival of these boxes, with one exception, was the fruit of this generous-mindedness; for their contents were intended for Germaine Parson, although the purchaser made believe they were for his own use.

"Come, Parsy," exclaimed Folliss, "let's attack. Brandy, you have a good hand for a hammer."

Jovially they went to work, bringing to light a Browning spectrum apparatus, a set of Typen plates, and a superb binocular with object-glasses an inch and seven-eighths in diameter, with all the newest improvements in rack motion and focusing screw, set in aluminium, and put up in leather.

Parson danced with delight, as he released from its wrappings a new transit instrument, called diploidoscope, an instrument most beautifully and accurately adjusted for marking time.

"Just what I have been wishing to see, Bly, ever since the English journals began to mention it. I tell you, fellows, there are wonderful capabilities in this

little thing. You may send your Beesleys and Jurgensens to the British Museum, to be handed down to posterity as specimens of the implements used by their savage ancestors. This and the spectrum are going to put into your vest-pockets a little thing not larger than a coat-button, at a cost of not half a crown, which will give the time of day infallibly. No breaking of mainsprings, no running slow or fast, no winding up, no bother about repairs."

It is to be regretted that Parson has not yet completed that invention. We may as well wind our watches a few more evenings.

Our time need not be consumed in further description of the unpacking of Folliss's boxes. Rather let us follow Parson to the window, where he is trying the range of the binocular. Brandon, meanwhile, wrenching off the cover of the one excepted box whose contents were really for Folliss's own use, discovers three new suits of clothes. In an instant he is at Parson's side. With a pair of Bly's new inexpressibles, held out straight and stiff with the aid of two walking-sticks, he peers out into the air, and cries, —

"What an instrument! By Jove! I can see Dr. McMurray picking grapes over at Niagara."

Parson lets down the binocular at this, and Bly Folliss also looks up at the scene.

A good-natured roar had barely reached its zenith, when a knock sounded upon the door, followed by the appearance of Carney Dugan, armed with the appliances of her occupation.

"I wants to clane up, Misther Fully," she said.

"No, sir-ee. You can't touch a single straw here this day. Don't you see all these new machines and things? If you were to touch one of them, and it should go off, it would blow you to Russia. Look out! Don't knock that microscope over."

"Is dhat a mockeryscoop? An' what's it for?" asked Carney.

For a reply, Bly set the instrument, and placed a tiny specimen upon the plate. The old woman looked through the tubes, as she was directed, held up her hands in horror, and exclaimed, —

"Pether an' Paul! is dhere sech bugs as dhim in dhe house? An' dhis a new house too! I'd be goin' to Misther Blossom, dhis hour, wid it. Am I to clane up, Misther Fully?"

"Not a stroke, Mrs. Dugan."

"Id shuit meself av I was you, Misther Fully; an' if I'd dhe day to me own self, too, I'd have time, mayhap, to see Misther Macrae," said Carney, with an inquisitive, searching look at Folliss.

Bly caught the word, and the expression upon Carney's face. But there was nothing responsive in his own, nor even a word of advice to Carney as to the spending of her time. He was completely silenced.

Carney waited decently for a moment, and then left the room, muttering as she went, —

"He wasn't here, then, dhe liar!"

And as a matter of fact, Folliss had not thought of Macrae for many days, nor had he as yet seen the card dropped by his old friend in the letter-box.

Day after day letters had been taken thence; but the card, a thin, flat, hardly tangible thing, lay snugly at the bottom of the box.

For a time, Carney's speech and its manner diverted Folliss from his immediate surroundings, and his two friends caught him dreaming.

"What's up, Bly?" was Brandon's first sally. "Has the dear old lady been proposing?"

"H'm! Proposing! I should think so. Here's a queer thing: That old creature proposes to go and spend the day with Mr. Macrae," said Bly.

"Well, what is to prevent? Tell her to put on a clean pinafore, Bly, and not to eat too much, and be a good girl."

"Stop your chaff, Brandy," cried Bly. "You don't know a funeral from a picnic sometimes."

"I wish I could get this out of my head," added Bly. "Parsy, you remember meeting Macrae at Patton Junction, don't you?"

"Yes; and I remember going up to Si Kimber's on a fool's errand, partly on his account."

"And you remember that old woman at Si's, last autumn?"

"Yes; same name as our *Hausmutter:* what about her?"

"You're very bright, this morning, Parsy, — bright enough to be on the bench. Come, if you are in a questioning and not an asserting humor, help me out of this," said Folliss.

"State your case."

"I charged Mrs. Dugan one day with being the

same person we saw at Si Kimber's, and she denied it."

"Not a finable offence," said Parson. "The prisoner is discharged."

"Hold on," replied Bly. "Not quite so fast. More times than I can recollect, I used to wonder what Tom Macrae was doing at Patton. Just at that time, if you remember, young Hollins was lost. Do you remember what Debby told us about the Irishwoman's agitation over that gold and onyx ornament which Debby wore at her throat? Now, here is this Mother Superior of ours" —

A knock at the door broke Folliss's sentence in two. "Come in!" he cried; and the invitation was responded to by a frowsy, coarsely-clad man, who surveyed the company generally, and finally asked, without any waste of words, —

"Misser Fulluss?"

Bly acknowledged his identity; and after some fumbling the visitor produced a letter which Bly proceeded to read, the stranger standing cap in hand, motionless.

The letter was as follows: —

"M FOLL

Deer

Sir Decem the 2 nine.

We ben good del harrid or wold writ afore. Deb is sick, verry. She maks out as she mus see yu rite off. Wat she want fur to see you fur is moar as she will tel. Ef theys ben anithin atween her an you, i wants to see you, to. An ef theys ben anithin, by ginger (this sentence was crossed out).

She says if you kant kum send up that other [here Si had made awful attempts to spell a long word, and had given it up; but evidently he meant "gentleman"].

He'll do, I disrember his naim.

Yure's till nex.

J. KIMBER.

P.S. Ef anithin atween you an Deb Kimber, by ginger [here Si changed his mind, apparently, and literally scratched out this whole postscript].

"Mystery upon mystery!" said Bly, turning to his companions. "Listen to this!"

Bly read the letter aloud to them, and asked, "What does it mean?"

"That's for you to say, by ginger," responded Brandon.

Bly laughed a little, but at heart he was annoyed. Turning to the messenger, he asked, —

"How sick is Debby Kimber?"

"Ain't sick."

"But the letter says she is."

"Wait," said Brandon: "this letter is dated Dec. 29."

Taking up the subject at this point, Bly asked, "Was Debby sick last December?"

"Iss; h'awful."

"Where did you get this letter?"

"Si Kimber."

"When?"

"Isterdeh."

"What do they want of me?"

"Dunno, zir."

"Is there any trouble up there?"

"Dunno, zir."

"Do they really expect me to come?"

"Dunno, zir."

"Well," said Bly, "what do you know?"

"Dunno, zir."

Bly was perplexed. The journey to Little Bear at this time of the year would be a dismal affair, and yet Bly could not believe that the Kimbers would send for him without good reason.

"Ah, that miserable young Algie Burnson!" he thought. "Is it possible that Debby has been worshipping his image silently, after the fashion of women, for two years and more, and has she succumbed at last? Is she seeking knowledge of the whereabouts of Blankdom, that she may make a pilgrimage thither, and bow down before the object of her adoration in person? If that is the case," continued Bly in his thoughts, "I will put a stop to it; and it is worth a journey to Little Bear Lake."

Bly was very wide of the real facts of the case, as he very soon learned. And, if he had known just what Debby Kimber had ardently desired to say to him on what she believed to be her death-bed, Bly would have been quite as ready to go in December as in March.

The impulse to do good was strong in this young man. True, he had never had opportunity to do any thing great in that direction; but here might be the opportunity, and he embraced it. Turning to the messenger, therefore, he asked, —

"How can I get from the terminus to Kimber's?"

"Dunno, 'less oi carries 'ee."

"How?"

"In's woggon. Woggon's coomin' a'ter me 'n you, t'morrer."

"Is Si coming over himself?"

The messenger grinned as he answered, "'Im's afeard. Si's goin' t'timber, up lake, t'day. 'Im'll be gone a wik."

This was something of a relief to Bly, at all events; for the letter had a threatening aspect in part.

"I'll meet you at the station, then, to-morrow morning," he said to the messenger.

"Night, zir," was the whole of the man's reply.

"What's your name?"

"Bogle, zir — Jim."

The man departed, leaving the three bachelors suspended between the serious and the ludicrous. Folliss, however, was inclined to be quite grave; and, out of consideration for their friend, the others postponed innumerable jokes which they had prepared to pelt him withal.

"Fellows," said Bly, "the air is thick with mystery! What is to come of all these things? I can't put this Macrae matter together. There's the postman! Parsy, will you please open the box for me?"

Germaine opened the box, and brought Bly four letters and a card. The card attracted his attention first. He turned it over and over, and his face wore such an expression that both his friends were alarmed.

"No bad news, I hope, Bly," said Jack Brandon.

"N—no, not bad news; but, see here, I'm getting thoroughly shaken up. We were talking of mysteries; and here comes another one, the tallest one of the lot. I can't make it out. Look at that card!"

They looked as they were bidden, Brandon volunteering to remark, "Your friend is rather careless, I should think."

The card was one of Thomas Macrae's, having his name engraved upon it. Now, no man can always keep his wits in full play. And, if you trifle with edge-tools, you need not be surprised if you receive a sudden reminder of their sharpness. In a fit of abstraction, while instructing Tim Brannigan the preceding week, Macrae had scribbled upon that card. He had written "Hallowell" in one place, "E. P." in another, "Hickoryville" in a third. Abstractedly he had put it into his card-case again. Foolishly he had dropped it into Bly Folliss's letter-box.

To Bly Folliss it was like the momentary shaking of a lantern on a dark night. He thought he saw into one of the mysteries which surrounded him; but could he express his thoughts with any definiteness? All he could do as yet was to assume that Thomas Macrae was employing a fictitious name, and that Carney Dugan was in possession of a letter intended for him,—a letter sent to him under that name. Well, what then?

Parson and Brandon were soon in possession of all the facts, so far as Folliss could give them. Together, the three went over and over them, with the unanimous conclusion that Macrae had some object in the

assumption of a false name, and that Mrs. Dugan was privy to it. And further, that, deny it as vigorously as she pleased, she was identical with the woman whom they had seen at Si Kimber's. Of course she was! They could all see it clearly enough now.

"Then I must find her," said Bly, "at once. I want to know what all this means."

But Carney was not to be found. Again and again Bly rang for her, but some of the other servants always answered the bell. He sent to her room, even, late at night: it was still tenantless. In the morning came information that Carney had not been seen about the building since the early part of the preceding day.

Bly was forced to take his departure for Si Kimber's, therefore, without the light he had half expected to obtain from her, not only in regard to Macrae, but also concerning matters at Kimber's.

"Good-by, fellows," he said rather dismally. "This will be a fine lark if the Dugan and that frowzy-head turn out to be mediums, and we get 'The Alderney' filled with spirit-rappings, or some other crazy nonsense."

Two days elapsed, and the night between. On Friday evening Bly returned; and his friends were awaiting him, according to agreement. A hot supper had been sent up to Bly's rooms by the *chef:* that despatched, cigars were lighted, and Bly Folliss related his adventures.

We must let him tell his own story in these pages as well, leaving it to some subsequent chapter to reveal why Carney could not be found when most wanted.

CHAPTER XXVI.

SEVERAL STORIES IN ONE.

"FIRST, you must know," began Bly Folliss, "when I entered the train, there were the Adelon girls, and that booby Giles Barry dancing about them. So I felt a little choice of my company, and told frowzel-top to find a seat for himself, and I would do the same. But, after we changed cars at Patton, my guide thought he might as well be companion and familiar friend as well, and squeezed himself into the seat next me. And what do you suppose was the first thing he said to me?

"'Doos 'ee knaw Carney Dugan?'

"'I know Mrs. *Margaret* Dugan,' I replied cautiously.

"'No, 'ee doan't,' was his next remark. 'Ee knaws *Carney* Dugan. She be the woman at Th' Alderney.'

"Having nothing more to say, I looked out of the window. The fellow punched me presently, and says, 'Doos 'ee knaw Cray?'

"'Cray?' I asked. 'Who or what is Cray?'

"'Muster Crae, 'im as Carney knaws.'

"'No, I don't think I do,' I answered.

"'Iss, 'ee doos. Bean't naw use lyin'.'

"I was on my dignity in an instant. I can't help

laughing to think how pugnacious I felt: only the fellow looked so big and burly, that I thought, on the whole, it would be the sensible thing to let him alone. So I left the seat, and took another.

"In less than a minute he was at my side again, sticking his elbow into me: he said, 'Ee *do* knaw Muster Cray, — Cray o' Millenton, — I knows 'ee do.'

"Then it came into my head that he was talking of Tom Macrae, and I asked him if my surmise was correct.

"'Iss,' he answered.

"'Carney's mad wi'm,' he added after a long silence.

"'Mad with whom?' I asked.

"'Wi' Cray.'

"'What for?' said I.

"'Dunno, zir,' was his characteristic answer.

"'How do you know, then, that she is angry with him?' I continued.

"'Seed 'em las' night.'

"'Where?'

"'Prince o' Cummelun.'

"That, you know, is a miserable inn, near the upper station.

"I questioned him right and left, then, but there was little to be got out of him. The truth was, he knew very little about the matter. Only he had known Carney somewhere or other; and seeing her at the inn, and noticing so superior a person as Macrae hanging about, and finally finding that this person and Carney went off to the private parlor together and had a

lengthy interview, he had allowed his curiosity to run rampant. Here we two were, therefore, trying to pump each other; and dry work it was.

"There was a change in the atmosphere, however, when we arrived at Si Kimber's. Baffy and Debby looked at me in astonishment.

"'Why, Mr. Folliss,' said Baffy, 'what on airth brings you up here this time o' year? There ain't no fishin', nor huntin', neither. We're jest as glad to see you, though; ain't we, Deb?'

"It struck me that Debby did not look so very glad. She was pale and thin, and her hands had lost that tough, meaty look they used to have. She turned upon me, as the poets say, a withering look of scorn, and said, —

"'Wasn't you sent for?'

"'Yes,' I answered; 'and here I am, Debby; and very sorry to hear of your sickness.'

"'Oh, yes! you air dreffful sorry, ain't you? And a precious long time it took you to get over cryin' about it, and start!'

"'Why, Debby,' I said, 'I got your father's letter yesterday, as this man here can tell you; and here I am, by the first train.'

"'Yisterday!' she screamed. 'Didn't you git that letter till yisterday? The old fool! That's jest like par. He writ that letter las' December, when I thought I was a-goin' to die. No wonder he went off to timber this morning. He'd better not be around here, I can tell him!'

"It seems that Si knew as much. He had put the

letter in his pocket, fellows, forgotten all about it, and left the coat which contained it hanging all winter. Happening to find it on Tuesday, he intrusted it to Bogle, old frowzy, who was coming to Toronto to purchase tools and supplies for the rafting-camp.

"Debby began to cry, and I couldn't stand that. So I asked Mrs. Kimber to get me up a supper, and followed her into the kitchen to ask what all this meant.

"'Well,' she told me, 'Deb's kine o' weak ever sence she had the fever. You remember that ole Irishwoman. And that thing Deb used to wear — up here. And the crazy feller. Well, we couldn't get a thing out of the woman, only we could see she knowed something about that poor chap. Two or three times she bu'st out a-mournin' an' cryin' an' takin' on, sayin' there was misery enough in this world, anyway, — which is true, Mr. Folliss, — and beggin' God to forgive her for makin' more.

"'Well,' she went on, 'the old woman went away to Toronto, and Deb got to thinkin' and thinkin'. Old Carney took a great fancy to you, I guess, an' talked about you so much, that Deb an' me bet she'd hunt you up. One day Deb says to her, 'Mrs. Dugan, the man that come up here after that crazy fellow asked me if Mr. Folliss hadn't ben here a-fishin'. He looked to me as if he knowed Mr. Folliss.' Well, wild horses couldn't 'a' held her then. Go she would, an' go she went; an' we ain't heerd a word of her sence.'

"'She's perfectly well,' I said; 'and in a very com-

fortable home, too, Baffy. In fact, she found me out long before I found her out. She is a servant at 'The Alderney,' where I live, and takes care of my rooms.'

"'Well, now, I declar'!' said Baffy. (You remember how she displays the palms of her hands on such occasions, no matter whether they are covered with dough or not.) 'Well, now, goodness be praised for that! She's a good creetur, but an awful blunderer.'

"Debby came in at this point, and finished the story. She began by giving me a description of the man who came for the crazy fellow; and, if it wasn't Tom Macrae, it was his twin-brother at least.

"Debby went on to tell me, that, after Carney's departure, she was constantly troubled in mind about the affair: and the more she thought of it the stronger was her feeling that there was something wrong, by whom committed, and how, she was of course as ignorant as you and I are this minute; and all she could determine was, that I ought to know what was going on, and to take steps to find the sufferer. Then she was taken sick, and grew nervous over the affair, insisting finally that her father should send for me.

"Debby gave me the cuff-button. Here, — look at it! The marking on the back does not shed much light upon the matter, I confess. 'B. H. to B. H. Paris — Millington.' I have heard that Macrae is sweet on a Miss Hart — Hart — something or other. As likely as not, some crazy man stole that button; and Macrae, like a true knight, set out to recover it."

"Yes; but, Bly, there are two B. H.'s," broke in Jack Brandon. "What do you make of that?"

"Wait!" added Germaine Parson. "Do you remember the item I read you from the Toronto paper, the day we returned from Little Bear,—the announcement of the death of young Hollins of Millington?"

"Yes; but he has been dead and buried these two years," said Folliss.

"Nevertheless, your friend Macrae may be the man who killed and buried him," added Parson.

"Nonsense! Macrae isn't of that sort. He's a gentleman, whatever else he may be."

"But Hollins begins with H, my friend," continued Parson. "Now, what was his Christian name?"

"I can tell you in just one minute."

Bly Folliss was utterly unwilling to believe, even yet, that Macrae had any criminal connection with this matter; but his thoughts were quickening, according to a well-known law of mental action. He crossed the hall, and knocked at the door of one of his neighbors' rooms.

"Granby," he said, "you knew young Hollins of Millington, didn't you?"

"Certainly."

"What was his Christian name?"

"Benjamin."

"Any middle name?"

"N—no."

Bly returned, and added this point to the still scanty stock of knowledge, and Brandon grasped it at once.

"There you have it,—B. H., Benjamin Hollins, to B., the girl, whatever her name was,—or *veechy vairsy*, as Professor MacCulloch says. And you say

your friend Macrae is reported as leaning in that direction? That settles it. There is a romance, — love, jealousy, insanity, abduction, murder, remorse! Suicide would be a fair finish, now, wouldn't it? or a hanging?"

"Brandy," said Parson, "you are an imaginative man! What you don't know, you can invent. You will write a novel, the first thing you know."

"Plenty of material" — Brandon began to say.

"Fellows," interjected Bly Folliss, "we have arrived at the end of our tether: we are at the blind end of a *cul-de-sac*."

"Then I shall get out," said Brandon. "I'm going over to Templeton's."

Germaine Parson departed with Brandon; and Bly Folliss betook himself to his bed, but not to sleep. He lay thinking of the mysteries which surrounded him. Indistinctly, indefinitely, he felt that a hand was pushing him on, a finger beckoning to him out of the darkness to enter and search. He shivered at the thought of looking in among dead men's bones, covered his head, and refused to take any more interest in the affair. Of no use, however, was such a resolve. The next minute he was thinking again, going over and over the whole problem, gazing at it as a bewildered schoolboy does at x and y and z, in the vague hope that they will write themselves and their equations down, and leave him no labor to perform except to note that x=this, y=that, and z=the remainder.

"'Post laborem, requies.' What on earth should

put that into my head?" said Bly to himself, as the clock struck two. "I haven't thought of it since I left it hanging over the door of old Dideron's school-room. No rest until I go to work, eh? Then I'll begin to-morrow morning."

Bly was rewarded for this resolve by a gentle touch, — not from any of the heathen gods, thank you: we have had enough of that. It was the operation of another of nature's laws. His resolve removed the exciting pressure upon the nervous system; and Bly Folliss yawned himself into a healthy young man's sound, refreshing sleep.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A CLASHING OF CONTRARY WILLS.

FOR several days after Macrae's evening interview with Mr. Hollins, he did not make his appearance at Elmswoods. He knew that delicate work was going on there; and he left it, for the present, to the man whose fatherly interest in him had grown to such strange but welcome proportions. Macrae was not hasty, not even impatient, now.

On Sunday he made a visit at the house, waited long enough for Mr. Hollins to offer him any information or advice he might wish to add to what he had already given him, and, receiving no intimation of any change, took his departure. Ill at ease he was for a while, but not discomfited. Such work, he reflected, takes time.

The following Tuesday found him busy at the mills, working with all his might, so that he might take time for an extra visit to Toronto. Evidently the letters which were referred to in his last advices from Hickory Hall, and which he had failed to get, had contained matter of importance. Those letters had unaccountably disappeared. He had charged Carney with abstracting them, but the charge seemed almost preposterous when he came to reflect upon it. He

thought now that the woman had not wit enough to abstract them. And above all, although it seemed impossible that Ben should really recover, an anxiety sprang up in Macrae's heart, which he vainly endeavored to stifle.

It was useless to fight against this feeling. "To-morrow," he exclaimed, "I will go to Toronto. If they are sending letters weekly, I may as well have them as early as possible."

Macrae accomplished a great deal that Tuesday, not at the mills only, but elsewhere. In the evening he went to Elmswoods. Not a lady of the household was visible: Mr. Hollins was found alone in the library. Macrae felt a chill of disappointment coming upon him, as he passed through the silent halls, and entered into Mr. Hollins's presence. The revulsion of a feverish hope succeeded, when the elder man held out his hand, with a cordiality which expressed more than mere gladness at his coming.

"Well come, Thomas!" said Mr. Hollins. "I have had no news for you until to-night. Of course such a matter as the one I mentioned to you cannot be pressed. We have all taken time for it. But Mrs. Hollins tells me that Betty has asked to see her privately this evening, and that it is to consult with her, doubtless, on the very matter which now concerns us all so deeply. Thomas, this is a pretty dull way of making love, for you; but circumstances have rendered it necessary: and, if you win that girl's heart, she will make it all up to you in the warmth of her devotion."

What could have infatuated this old man to such an extent? At the moment he was so speaking to Thomas Macrae, Betty Hartley was weeping out her very soul, and imploring Mrs. Hollins to support and strengthen her.

The very mention of marriage with Thomas Macrae had roused Betty to indignation. For the first time in all her life, she felt that it was possible for the daughter to be set against her mother. For, on the very first mention of the subject by Mrs. Hartley, Betty had fled from her, and flung herself upon the sympathy of Ben's mother.

"I would die, Mrs. Hollins," exclaimed Betty, "die, rather than do such a thing. I am Ben's wife, and no other man's." And in her excitement and grief Betty became even prophetic. "I know he will come back. He cannot be dead. He is coming to claim me. It would cover me with shame to allow Mr. Macrae to even speak to me of marriage."

"Well, dear child, you are certainly your own mistress," replied Mrs. Hollins. "We thought it would be better for you, Betty, — that was all."

"You? — you thought so too?"

"Yes, dear. But there, let it go now. No one shall try to force you, dear child."

There followed a scene of weeping and consoling. Mrs. Hollins, with her great motherly kindness covering all that household, called Mrs. Hartley in presently; and the mother and daughter were speedily put at one again.

Down-stairs nothing was heard of this; but, while

the ladies were enjoying the sweets of reconciliation, Ephraim Hollins was giving Thomas Macrae new courage, and painting in glowing colors an old man's bright anticipations for two young creatures who were the pride of his heart. And, as Macrae took his leave, the old man added, "Wait patiently, Thomas, for a few days! Somehow, I have great faith in Monday next. It is your birthday: we are to sign the papers on that day. We will do that here, in the library. And perhaps that very day will bring us all a new happiness. I feel it, — somehow, — that that is to be a grand day for us all, Thomas. Good-night, and God bless you!"

Macrae walked down to Millington by the longest route again, around by Bridge Hill. He could hardly tell whether to be jubilant or depressed. He felt almost sure of his coming joy; but his anxieties whispered constantly in his ear, "Beware! Beware!! Beware!!!"

On Bridge Hill he felt a shudder. "It is cold," he said to himself. The wind whistled across the hill; and the voice of a devil, whose company he had not had for some time past, sounded wailing in its track, "Warm enough down here, Thomas Macrae! Marry the girl you love, do just as you please, and then come and live with us. Oh, how merry we are!"

Macrae hastened on, and flung himself upon his bed. It was a rare resort to him to drink; but he poured himself a great glass of cognac that night, and drank it off. It set him on fire. He dreamed of all horrible shapes, — of Ben drowning in mid-ocean, of Carney rescued, and denouncing him as Ben's mur-

derer; of Betty offering herself to him, to be his wife, his friend, his comfort, and, when he took her to his arms, turning into a corpse, livid and hideous.

On awaking in the morning, Macrae was weak enough. He trembled like one who has been badly frightened. Again and again he exclaimed in language which only desperate circumstances could have wrung from him — he was becoming familiar with it now.

His bath was stinging cold, but it served him a good purpose. He took new life from it, — charged his troubled dreams to the brandy, put up his handbag, and went to Toronto as determined as ever.

From the station to the post-office Macrae walked rapidly.

"No letters, sir," said the clerk.

"None?" Macrae was surprised, but turned away to reflect. "Nothing from Hickory Hall!" he repeated to himself.

He walked up Adelaide Street, slowly, meditating.

"It must be all right," he concluded. "Ben is dashing their fond hopes. He has gone back again. May he go into the depths, and stay there!"

He walked on, another square, and looked at his watch. "No need to see T. B. this time," he muttered. "I can catch the 7.30, and get to Millington at eleven."

"Not to-night, Thomas Macrae!" said a startling voice. A hand — a bony, skinny hand, whose touch disgusted him — was laid upon his arm; and the voice repeated, "Not to-night. I want you, Thomas

Macrae. You must listen, as yure life is in dhe balance."

This woman, who had again found Macrae, had been wavering now for many months, as we well know, between a half-romantic attachment for the name of Macrae, and a weak sense of justice and right; between a fear of danger to herself, and a desire to set right again a wrong which her own foolishness had contributed to bring about; between the stupid indifference which comes of ignorance and debasement, and the workings of a conscience whose fires at best were fitful.

By degrees, and slow ones, she was working herself up to action; and Macrae was unconsciously assisting. Seeing him now once more, she determined to appeal to Macrae for the last time. She escaped from "The Alderney," as we have related, and from the turmoil of microscopes and impossible bugs, and made her way to the post-office. The clerk at the General Delivery recognized her, and again gave her a letter addressed to E. P. Hallowell, forgetting, in his amusement over Carney's blarney, Mr. Hallowell's order to the contrary. Regretting his action a half-hour afterward, he still had no inclination to expose his own carelessness when Mr. Hallowell himself came; and, as it turned out, paid no penalty for what the authorities of the office would have considered a misdemeanor.

All day long Carney lingered in the neighborhood of the post-office, hoping that Macrae would come. The early evening brought her desire to an issue; and

as Macrae stood under the lamp, taking the time, she seized the opportunity.

"He has a meeting with Tim Brannigan," thought Carney; and grasping Macrae's arm, she uttered the words which answered his thoughts as well as they finished her own, — "Not to-night, Thomas Macrae."

Macrae now turned upon the woman, thoroughly enraged, and cried, —

"Woman, I will not be dogged and pursued in this fashion. Go your way, and let me go mine!"

"It's dhe way to destruction, Thomas Macrae. Will I stand an' see you ate yerself up? What wud yer father, an' dhe mother that bare you, say to dhis? Be reasonable, man, an' don't talk like a wild Frinchman!"

"Leave me," he continued. "Go, or I shall strike you!"

"Strike me!" she answered, with dogged boldness. "You strike me! Do it, do it wanc't, Misther Thomas, an' I'll rise dhe town on you."

Carney was shaking with anger. She quelled the storm, however, instantly, and once more addressed Macrae.

"Again, Misther Thomas, I ask, — will you go to Mrs. Brannigan's wid me? An' not to see Tim, mind, but me."

Macrae was perplexed. He could not afford to be violent to this gray-haired woman: his hands refused to strike.

"Come, then. And it must be for the last time: do you hear?"

"I hear, Thomas Macrae; and God grant it may be dhe last time and dhe best. O Misther Thomas!" she continued, lowering her voice to its gentlest tones, "if you knew dhe good I wish you, and dhe worruk I'd do to save you! An' it's me gets all dhe haird knocks."

At "The Prince of Cumberland House" it was not difficult for Carney to arrange with her friend and crony for the use of a suitable room where she could be alone with Macrae; and for hours they sat there together talking of Ben Hollins.

Macrae was surprised and annoyed to find that Carney's recollection of the events of two years ago was minute and exact. They were impressed upon his own memory forever; but he had hoped, with a fatuity which has ruined many a criminal, that Carney had lost the thread of all that dismal history.

On her part, Carney plead with him, and entreated him to tell her where Ben was. She offered even to shield the real criminal, by taking all the guilt upon herself, if he would only let her restore Ben to his home.

"It's on me conscience, Misther Thomas. I'm not guilty, God knows: it's you, an' you alone. But it's on me conscience that if I had spoke to Harper soon enough, if I had been quicker to tell them all the troot, if I had been in less of a hurry to go to Arboe, dhis sorry would have niver been."

Macrae undertook at last to deceive her, to lull her conscience and her reason to sleep, by offering again to send her over the sea. She was in arms in

an instant. No, nothing would serve her now but absolute compliance with the one demand she had made, the achievement of the one object she had in view.

Until midnight the battle raged, neither yielding. Macrae could not place the secret of Hickory Hall in the possession of this woman: Carney would not be content with less.

At twelve o'clock Macrae arose, and asked Carney to wait five minutes for him, leaving his hand-bag on a chair as security for his return. He went into the public room, and entered one of half a dozen little cells ranged along the wall, — cramped, dark, dismal holes, where men were accustomed to eat in unconsciousness of the many imperfections of what was set before them. Here he found Timothy Brannigan. A brief conference between the two ended in Brannigan's emerging from his retreat, and going to the room where Macrae had left Carney.

Tapping the poor old creature's shoulder with unnecessary severity, Tim said, "It's time to go to bed, Mrs. Dugan. You're almost asleep in your chair."

"Not yet, Tim, not yet. I've business to do."

"Who wid?"

"Dhat's my business."

"Is it wid Misther Hallowell?"

"Misther who?" screamed Carney.

"Misther Hallowell, you yelpin' ould witch! Don't be r'isin' dhe house at dhis hour! Come, get up! I'll show you where to sleep."

"Wait, I tell you! He'll return."

"That he won't," said Tim, laughing. "He's gone."

"Gone?" cried Carney. "Gone to his death, dhen. Oh dhe black ingratitude of men! His death be on his own head, dhen! I may as well go home."

"Indeed, an' you'll do nothing of the sort, Mrs. Dugan. To say nothing of the lack of hospitality, — and mother 'ud kill me for that to-morrow, — you're not goin' out uv this house till I let you go. And you'll make no noise about it, aither, or it'll be the worse for you."

Carney was thoroughly cowed by the ferocity of this fellow, and allowed herself to be held as a prisoner. She was placed in an upper room in a remote part of the house, and the door was locked from the outside. In the morning her breakfast was brought up, and she was warned not to make a noise, and bring disgrace upon her friend's house, and at the same time cajoled with the promise of a visit from Mrs. Brannigan.

All that day (it was Wednesday, March 8) she waited, and in vain. Tim's threats terrified her. All day Thursday, too, she was still a prisoner. But towards evening, while walking the floor, crying softly to herself, her temper changed. She became enraged, and, gathering up her dress, shook it violently.

"Why didn't I think of dhis?" said she. And from the pocket of her gown she took a bunch of jingling keys, — the keys to a score of doors at "The Alderney." One after another she tried them. At last, with joy, she found one that turned the bolt: she opened the door, and was free.

Now she had no fears. She would walk out boldly; and if Tim confronted her, or hindered her, she would "make a noise" that he never would forget. But Tim was not in her way. She passed through the halls, down the stairs, and out into the open street, without let or hinderance. It was not many minutes before she was safe in her own room.

Carney was all aflame now. She for the first time fully comprehended that Macrae was wholly given over to the prosecution of his object, and that it was useless for her to interpose her pleadings and warnings. She saw, too, that he would not scruple to visit his vengeance upon her. No such fear had occurred to her before. But now he had spoken of striking her, and had made her a prisoner. Her brain grew bewildered with the intricacies and enormities surrounding her; and, wearied out, she fell asleep.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CONFESSIONS.

IT was at last Saturday morning, — the morning of the 11th of March. Briefly the situation was this. At Elmswoods were three elderly persons, calm and settled in the conviction that one whom they all had loved deeply, and whose memory was still green and dear, was dead, — gone from their sight until the time of "the restitution of all things," — and one young woman, a little pale, with an anxious shade upon her face, a firm, set look in her eye, as of one who is struggling against pressure from without. She is made of clay, this young woman, like all the rest of us. With all her conviction, with all her genuine sentiment, with all her love for Ben, she may grow plastic under this pressure, and submit to be moulded into a new shape. It may become possible to erase the name of Ben Hollins, written so deeply upon her heart, — not completely, but leaving only faint outlines of the old writing, — and to place there in new and golden letters, or in deep and solemn-looking characters, a new name, — the name of Thomas Macrae.

For they have conspired against her, all these companions and friends, not meaning to harm her, but to befriend her; meaning to open the doors of Comfort

Lodge to her, and give her the very peace which their great love desires for her. The reconciliation of Tuesday last was only a ruse, a postponement.

And she, Betty Hartley, resists and fights. She argues them down, she pleads, and sheds little rivulets of tears; grows angry finally, and says, —

"It is of no use, mamma. In one word, I won't, there!"

That battle is ended. No blood is shed. The warriors have only blustered, beat their drums, and blared upon their trumpets, wheeled their horses upon the field, and flashed their weapons in the sun. They hold a conference at last, and decide to commit the whole affair to diplomacy. A mimic family imitation of national combats.

Says Mr. Hollins, "We must not challenge Betty any further. Let Macrae come now, and say his say. Let him state his own case. If that is of no avail, our dear girl must have her way."

In Toronto Carney was moving about among the rooms at "The Alderney," glowering and muttering. Her whole soul was imbittered at every thought of Macrae's treachery to her. However weak her sense of the injustice done to Ben Hollins, her own "ox" had been "gored" at last; and Carney was indignant, as her betters are under like conditions.

"I'll have it out wid him now, dhe liar, dhe thafe, dhe — murtherer! An' it's Misther Fully'll do it too," she said to herself and her dustpan.

Meantime Mr. Bly Folliss was sweetening his coffee and peppering his morning chop with cogitations upon

the very same subject. And, very likely at the identical moment of Carney's conclusion, he threw a spoon upon the table with a semblance of violence, and exclaimed, "I'll have it out with him! He must explain that ridiculous card. He is up to some mischief or other, and it will be a friendly thing to bring him up with a round turn; and that Dugan woman is the one to help me."

At Hickory Hall Dr. Peterson was holding a consultation with Laidlaw.

"Mr. Hallowell writes," he says, "that he will not be able to come until next week, after all. Business detains him."

"Doctor," says Laidlaw musingly, "I wonder if there is any hocus-pocus in this. I don't like the look of it. You will have Ben left on your hands."

"No, I think not. Mr. Hallowell is travelling, you know; though, now that I think of it, he seems to be travelling in a rather small circle. By the way, did you look up this Millington of which Ben speaks?"

"Yes: there is a Millington in Illinois, one in Michigan also, and a Millerton on the Harlem Railroad. There is a town in Canada whose name is spelled in the 'Guide' M-i-l-apostrophe-t-o-n."

"The very place!" exclaims Dr. Peterson. "One of the drafts for Ben's expenses came from that very town. Laidlaw, I begin to be seriously troubled about this matter. I shall telegraph there again."

The doctor's hand was upon his bell in another instant; and before many minutes a boy was sent off with a despatch to this Canadian town, and others also

to the towns in Michigan and Illinois. They like to be as well informed as possible at Hickory Hall. But the answer came from all points, "No such person as E. P. Hallowell here."

At Millington Thomas Macrae happened to be at the station sending off some business despatches, and heard the click of the key, all unconscious that the words which the operator was receiving had reference to himself, all ignorant that he had come so near to being struck literally by lightning.

Dr. Peterson had nothing to rest upon now but Mr. Hallowell's assurance that he would come for Ben the following week. He dismissed his suspicions, as who does not when repeated efforts bring suspicion to nothing?

They were anxious to get rid of Ben at Hickory Hall, — not out of any animosity towards him, as you can readily imagine, but for his own good. Dr. Peterson wished him to see the world again. He had faith in the awakening powers of familiar sights and sounds. He believed — nay, *knew* — that Ben was on the road to full health. Science had done much for him: the rest could be intrusted to Nature, which had taken kindly interest in the patient, and was gradually opening for him the doors of life. Admirable Science! adorable Nature!

A knock, a familiar knock, upon Bly Folliss's door, a hasty "Come in," and two employés of Nature were together.

"Misther Fully, wad ye give me a quarther uv an hour?" asked Carney.

"A half-dozen of them, Mrs. Dugan, on one condition, — namely, that you will employ them in telling me what I wish to know."

"Dhat's dhe very business I'm on, dhis perplexin' day, Misther Fully. But, Misther Fully, don't be lettin' dhim two harry-skarries in" —

Bly laughed heartily at the notion of Germaine Parson being a "harry-skarry," but assured Mrs. Dugan that the interview should be uninterrupted.

"Dhey'll be comin' to see dhe mockeryscoops an' dhe plagueyscoop an' dhe bugs; an' I've a bug meself to show you, Misther Fully, dhat'll rise dhe hair off yer head."

"All right! The harry-skarries shall not come in. Here! put this card on the door-plate, please."

Bly wrote upon a card, "*In at noon;*" and, when Carney had placed it, he locked the door, withdrew the key, and sat down for what he called an "out-and-outer" with Mrs. Dugan.

"Misther Fully," began Carney, "av ye should take a letther out uv dhe pos'-offy, what would dhey do to you?"

"Your own letter?"

"Well, I don't say dhat."

"If it was some one else's, Mrs. Dugan, you could be arrested and punished."

"Oh, me! But suppose dhere was almost murther in it?"

"But you see, Mrs. Dugan, it would be a crime" —

"I don't see anny thing about it, sir. Dhat's what

throubles me: I'm as blind as a fish." For a moment she hesitated, and then asked, —

"Is it a crime to do good, Misther Fully?"

Bly tapped the arm of his chair a moment, while he replied, "N-n-no, not if you do it in the proper way."

Quick as thought Carney handed Bly a sheet of paper. There was no covering, no outer address, to warn him. It was, in fact, the last of Macrae's letters from Hickory Hall, the one which Carney had abstracted on Wednesday, — the one which Macrae both desired and dreaded to receive, and whose non-arrival had lulled him into a deceptive security for the moment.

"Misther Fully, I'm not dhat aisy in readin' dhat one uv my age ought to be. Would ye *plaze* to read dhat for me?"

But Bly's suspicions were awakened. Blundering Carney had herself aroused them by her palaver.

"Is this your letter?" he asked.

Blundering took refuge in falsehood, its first cousin.

"Yes," she replied. "Read it, read it for dhe love of mercy, Misther Fully! It's dyin' I am wid grief an' — ohoo! ohoo!"

Here followed a flood of tears, the overflow of which melted this young man's tender, soluble feelings and suspicions at once.

"All this," he thought, "may be true. The poor creature may be suffering, and I may be the one to relieve her. Mighty respectable-looking writing, however, for such a woman's correspondent! Perhaps it is a lawyer's."

Bly was rising in importance and dignity, in his own eyes, during this course of reflection. He began to look upon himself as quite a patron of the poor and the oppressed. And now, as he held the letter out of his sight for a moment, this new sense of responsibility took shape in his mind. His youthful romance concocted an authoritative commission to investigate Carney Dugan's case — a commission, which might be put down in writing something after this fashion : —

"KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS: We do hereby constitute an Inferior Court, to be held this day and hour, in the chambers of one Bly Folliss, at 'The Alderney' so called, in the city of Toronto, and Province of Ontario. And we do name and appoint the aforesaid Bly Folliss to sit as Judge of the said Court. The Clerk will cry, 'Ohoo, ohoo!' as softly as possible, the same in order not to excite two harry-skarries who are coming up the stairs two steps at a time."

Nature made this appointment, in despite of all forms and order of law.

"Hark! Misther Fully," whispered Carney. "Bugs is nothin' to what's comin'. Leave 'em go!"

The two sat in silence, while Brandon and Parson, outside, read the "In at noon" card, commented briefly thereon, and went on to their own quarters. Whereupon the Judge of the Inferior Court called the case, and began to take evidence. The paper in his hand came first, of course. He read, —

"*Dear Sir*, — As you will have perceived from our last advices, our hopes have been growing of late. Your brother has for some time been showing signs of returning health. We are happy now to confirm any pleasant anticipations which

you may have derived from our previous letters, and to announce to you, that, in our opinion, you had better come next week prepared to take your brother away. We hope every thing for him from renewed contact with the world, and from travel especially.

"With congratulations, we are, dear Mr. Hallowell,

"———."

"Mr. who!" exclaimed Bly Folliss, springing to his feet. "What do you mean, Mrs. Dugan, by asking me to read this letter? It is not yours. Where did you get it?" he continued.

"I got it in dhe pos'offy, Misther Fully; an' I'd as good a right to it as him, anny day. Dhere's murther in it, an' lyin', an' thievin'. It isn't his brother, at all. It's Misther Ben Hollins, it is."

And now the floodgates of Carney's language were open. She poured into Bly's ear a tale which astonished and shocked him. The hour of noon sounded; and Bly removed the card upon his door, placing there another, postponing his opening to visitors. For Carney was voluble, circumstantial, roundabout, discursive: her own trials and troubles, from the far-off Arboe days down, mingled with the sorrows of Elmswoods and the crimes of Thomas Macrae.

And all that afternoon Bly Folliss sat with open eye, and never wearied. He waited patiently for every detail. He asked questions, set Carney on the track when she wandered; employed the minutes when she yielded to her propensity to wail, in thinking and in mourning, in wondering how such a man as Thomas Macrae could have sunk so low.

You or I would have put on our hat, at the finishing of Carney Dugan's story, and started for the nearest telegraph-office, to send word to Ben Hollins's father, eh! Perhaps so, perhaps not. To Bly Folliss other considerations came into prominent view. This man, Macrae, had been his friend. To pursue this matter in hot haste would be like asking Macrae to stand upon a box of gunpowder, and holding him there, while Carney Dugan, or some other agent, applied fire.

"Ah!" said Folliss, "very likely that would blow me up also, and the Dugan, and the whole lot of us!"

The Judge of Nature's Inferior Court felt the need of counsel. He sallied forth, therefore, to obtain it, looking for two friends who had been twice disappointed that day when looking for him.

At seven o'clock the three came together as by one impulse in Folliss's rooms, — Bly pre-occupied and anxious, the others curious, and disposed to chaff their host, and to call him a man of mysteries.

In no humor for pleasantries, Bly informed them that there was serious business on hand; and, for the second time that day, went over the ground covered by Carney's revelations, closing his narrative with a request that his advisers would speak their minds freely and fully.

There were many questions to be asked, much subsidiary information to be gleaned concerning Macrae's character and previous history, a deal of talking, of condemning, to be indulged in before these two were prepared to pronounce their opinion upon the one

important point, — upon what was to be done, not by Macrae, or by Mrs. Dugan, but by Bly Folliss.

The longer rolls of the clock-bell sounded before this conference came to an end. With the easy-going method of youth, the unanimous conclusion was reached, that Ephraim Hollins of Millington ought to be apprised of Macrae's suspicious behavior, of the presence at Hickory Hall of a patient who is called "Ben," and of the name of Macrae's correspondent. Further, that, as it was now practically Sunday, Monday morning would be the proper time for communicating with Mr. Hollins.

The Lord's Day following was a day of quiet and rest. Around Macrae a slightly hazy atmosphere of security had gathered. No news from Hickory Hall seemed almost the same as good news. After morning service at St. Peter's, Mr. Hollins spoke to him of the morrow; and Macrae read volumes of hope in the old man's face as he said, "I sincerely trust, Thomas, that you will have more articles than one to sign on your birthday."

In Toronto they rested also, — Mrs. Dugan in her way, the three friends in theirs.

At Hickory Hall there was quiet. You would think that all days ought to be alike there. Not so: the peculiar holiness of the Lord's Day envelops even Hickory Hall. The "Giant" occasionally storms one of the enemy's outer works, or has a skirmish; but regular pitched battles are deferred until Monday, or at least until twelve o'clock of Sunday night. "Uncle" Babbage is invariably "Elder" Babbage on this day,

and preaches a great many sermons, which are, as he describes them, "short, but brief."

Only in one known place within the range of our story was the day ruffled. Si Kimber returned to his home much earlier than was expected. About eleven o'clock Sunday morning Debby spied him sitting on the identical log which Ben had once occupied. Going to him, she looked him over with a ludicrous mingling of scorn and respect.

"You're a perty feller, you air," she said.

"Wot be the matter wi' me?" Si asked, hanging his head, looking at his boots and his hat, and affecting to regard her remark as directed towards some defect in his attire.

"You're a perty feller, you air. Ef you was a-goin' to keep that letter all winter long, why didn't you go an' keep it forever? that's what I want to know. Goin' an' gettin' that young Folliss up here, sech weather as this, — lucky for him it's ben a-thawin' so, — an' then runnin' away! You feel nice, don't ye?"

"Wull, now, Deb, doan't ye say a woord. I be that dashed wi' it all, I'm a reg'lar porpuss."

"Two nice things you've done, par, anyway. Ef you'd 'a' sent for Mr. Folliss when I ast you to, mebbe that crazy feller'd ben well by this time."

"Him well, Debbe? Naw, naw, they kind doan't do that."

"Pshaw, par, wot a ole" — said Debby, finishing her sentence with a contemptuous snort.

"'Nother thing I can tell ye," she continued: "Mr.

Folliss was that mad, you'll never see him at Little Bear agin, now you believe it."

This was pure exaggeration on Debby's part, and intended only to bring her "par" down. He came down like a squirrel with a load of buckshot under his skin. He became wretched, inconsolable, and vowed he would go to Toronto and make it up with Bly, if it cost him the profits of all next year.

Whereupon Miss Debby became more gracious to him, and in the gloaming sang him a dozen psalms, out of a browned old volume whose title-page declared that these productions were "more plain, smooth, and agreeable to the text, than any heretofore." Let us all be thankful that we did not live in the "heretofore."

This, for instance, was one of Debby's offerings to her father's wounded feelings: —

"O Lord my God, if it be so
that I committed this,
If it be so that in my hands
iniquity there is:

Then let the foe pursue and take
my soul, and my life thrust
Down to the earth, and let him lay
mine honour in the dust."

Thus that Lord's Day came and went. To-morrow is to be Devil's day.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ANOTHER DAY, THOMAS!

MONDAY, the 13th of March, is come. The day opens grimly, — cold, raw, and wet. The clouds hurry across the sky; now and then one blacker than its fellows dipping downward towards and very near the earth, changing every instant the form of its ragged edges, opening great mouths in its huge side, like a very shark hungering to devour and consume. What would it have? Human victims? They are ready. In every city and town, on country roads, in prisons, on battle-fields, there is carrion enough. Find it, sharks of the sea, sharks of the air, find it; gorge yourselves with it; eat, devour, consume all evil, root and branch, consume each other, and leave this world purer and better!

As the sun goes higher, the clouds pass away oceanwards, trooping to some Titanic sport in the realm of tempest and gale. The west wind gives place. The south sends warmer currents, the sky becomes genial, the sunlight is gentle. Men hold up their hands towards the day-ruler, and say, "That feels like summer — almost."

The atmospheric change put Thomas Macrae in high spirits. He took it as a good omen.

And so in very truth it was, but those for whom it was knew it not. Betty Hartley, looking out of window, saw the jagged March clouds disappearing in the far east, welcomed the sunlight, felt a passing wish that so might the griefs and perplexities of life fly away from her, and never once thought of there being "omens in the air."

In scrupulous manly toilet, at eleven o'clock, — the hour agreed upon between Ephraim Hollins and Thomas Macrae, — the two met in the library at Elmswoods. The one was ready to proceed to business, the other had something to say.

"Mr. Hollins," said Macrae, — prophetically as it happened, — "I shall never tell you how deeply all your kindly interest has touched me. I wish now to ask one further favor of you, before we proceed to sign the papers. May I see Miss Betty first?"

A vague fear came into Ephraim Hollins's mind: but it was accompanied by a procession of possibilities, by the sudden sense of what a net Macrae's feet would be in if he were bound to a business partnership with him, and yet should fail with Betty; by a remembrance of the fact that such failure sometimes unfitted men for business; by the truth, in a word, that all hinged upon Macrae's acceptance or rejection by this girl; and he bowed to Macrae's will, as if some mightier hand had stayed him. He admired Macrae the more for the proposition: it seemed a very master-stroke on Macrae's part.

They were brought together in the drawing-room with some little show of stratagem on the part of the

elders; Macrae being eager yet subdued, poor Betty tremulous. She had successfully resisted the attacks of those skirmishers, — her mother and Mrs. Hollins, — she had beaten them back; and here was the enemy at last, in force. He numbered but one, but Betty trembled as if there had been twenty thousand Macraes.

There was not the slightest opportunity for that reading of soul which enables two loving hearts to melt into each other, and have done with all the disagreeables of proposal and acceptance. Macrae never once thought of taking Betty's hand, turning the whites of his eyes up, and murmuring or whispering. He had come for business, and the business spirit was upon him. It was as if, in Blackstone, he had read a chapter on the "Forms of Contracting Matrimony," and now proposed to apply its teachings literally and legally. He would, and did, begin with a statement of facts. Then followed evidence and deductions, — finally the pleading. He was eloquent from first to last, especially in his closing speech. His words would have melted a heart of stone. Strangely, they only hardened the gentle heart of the girl, who now, out of very pity, listened to him to the end.

"O Mr. Thomas," she then said, "I cannot give you that which is another's! Do not, I pray, think me romantic. But I do not believe that I am free; and, if I were, it would be years before I could marry. Go into the partnership with Mr. Hollins, do, pray, and — and" —

"Mother! Betty! Mother! Betty!" A cry, an

old man's voice, strengthened, cleared, made thrilling, as if some message of mighty import was borne upon it, resounded through the halls. That cry penetrated to every part of the house. Doors were flung open, pale women looked out, and, from up stairs and down, ladies and servants came trooping to the library. At the entrance to this room stood Ephraim Hollins, his eyes eagerly straining to catch the first glimpse of his wife, while his feet refused to carry him farther. He held a paper, a little oblong sheet; and it shook and rustled as if it had voice, but could not articulate.

"What is it, father?" asked the frightened wife.

"Come, mother, come quickly! Ben, Ben, Ben! Here, read! O God! how good God is!"

The old man dropped upon the floor, not fainting, but almost hysterical.

Betty Hartley was on the spot very quickly, and Thomas Macrae near her.

Gasping, laughing, crying, all in a breath, the old man held up the paper to Betty.

"There, Betty, read it aloud! read it quick, girl! again and again."

In a moment more he was upon his feet again, and flung his arms around Macrae's neck, sobbing. "O Thomas! my son was lost, and is found again. He is not dead. They have found him at last, at last!"

Macrae grasped the paper, and devoured it at one look. It was a despatch from Bly Folliss, brief, and to the point.

"Do you know that your son is at Hickory Hall, Hickoryville, State of ——?"

A swooning girl was gently lifted in the arms of Mrs. Hartley and Mrs. Hollins, and laid upon a sofa. Joy had set the blood to running too fast in her young veins. Not too fast, perhaps, after all; for this fainting does not do such girls much harm.

A few minutes of lethargy, a few of keen suffering, and then we laugh. But in this case it was Betty who laughed.

"I knew he was not dead," she said, so sweetly, so firmly, that they all looked upon her as a prophetess indeed.

Macrae stood in a dazed, shocked, stupefied condition, until Ephraim Hollins took him by the hand, saying, "Another day, Thomas, another day!"

"Yes, another day," answered Macrae.

"And this is your birthday, too, Thomas."

"It is my death-day," thought Macrae.

"And Ben's birthday too," said the old man. "Mother, we will celebrate this day hereafter as Ben's birthday."

"Father," responded the wise woman, "meantime, let us have our son at home again."

She stopped, turned pale, and asked, "Hickory Hall! What is that?"

Macrae, the only one who could have answered that question, had taken advantage of this brief passage between the father and mother to leave the house. He felt that there was no longer a place for him within the walls of Elmswoods.

Once out in the open air, he filled it with bitter cursings. He turned sick at thought of the undefined

future. A homeless, placeless feeling enveloped him: he saw himself an outcast, a by-word.

He reached the road; and there, under cover of the tall hedge, he shook his fist at the great house, and almost cried aloud, "Curse you, curse you all! You shall not have him yet!"

A new purpose sprang up in him. He hurried down the road: he locked himself in his room, drew out packet after packet of papers, and committed them to the flames. He put up clothing enough to last for a fortnight, and sent it to the station. He drew a check covering the entire amount of his balance at the bank, and burned the rest of his check-book. This check was in his uncle's favor; and next morning that gentleman was greatly surprised at receiving it in his mail, with a brief note, requesting him to have the amount transferred to his own account, and to await further advices from him.

Upon his table he left a note for his landlady, containing money enough to liquidate all his obligations to her, and informing her that the contents of the room were her own, except the books, which were to be sent to the "Young Men's Library."

At Elmswoods, meantime, there was also much bustle and occupation. A portmanteau was packed for Mr. Hollins; and he made himself ready to go at once to the States, in search of his lost one.

A hurried visit to surgeon Braddock on the way to the station; a dozen words from that gentleman, giving Mr. Hollins the briefest, but yet sufficient, information concerning Hickory Hall and its location; a few

scratches of the surgeon's pen, turning off a letter of introduction to Dr. Wilding, Dr. Peterson's predecessor, dead two years ago; a glance at his watch; a hurried drive to the station, — and Ephraim Hollins took his place among the passengers in the eastward express at three o'clock.

Almost at the moment of starting, schedule time, the driver of the "Coburg, No. 83," leaning out of the cab-window for the conductor's signal, exclaimed, "Going east, Mr. Macrae?"

"Yes, Barney: I have a fancy to ride in the cab if you have room for me."

"Certainly. Take the bell-side if you please. It will keep you warm to ply the rope."

"Not the first time either, is it, Barney?"

Macrae had made many a trip in just this fashion. He had a passion for it years before, and had made acquaintance with several of the engineers on this road. He was popular among them for some reason or other, and an especial favorite of Barney Easton's.

"Going through?" asked Barney.

"Yes: business up at Barrie. Must get up there on the morning mail; too late to catch this afternoon's 4.15."

Macrae was laying a train of evidence for a possible law matter of the future. He was thinking, reasoning, plotting, now, with all his coolness and clearness. Again and again he spoke to Easton of the Northern Railway, asked what sort of town Barrie was, and if he knew A and B and C.

It was but a slight affair; and, as matters went, it

proved to be of no consequence. It is mentioned here, only as an instance of the now ceaseless scheming of this man. Not an opportunity for manufacturing evidence — small evidence, intended to throw dust in the eyes of men in certain possible events — was neglected.

At Toronto Macrae lingered upon the engine until the rush of passengers had subsided. The darkness of early evening shielded him. He made no inquiries for his trunk. A run to the "Prince of Cumberland," only one square off, a quick thrusting of a card into an envelope, and a direction to the bar-keeper to give it to Tim Brannigan, — the card having on it the words, "Look out! Be on hand any moment," — this consumed fifteen minutes. In five more he was again at the station, this time to take his seat in a coach for a night journey.

Four seats in front of him sat an old man, looking weary and excited. This old man turned more than once during the evening, and looked Thomas Macrae full in the face, once a little attentively. "That young man," he thought, "is of a type not seen often in these northern latitudes. The snow and the north winds bleach and redden: it is the tropical sun which browns and blackens."

Macrae had thought of all these contingencies; and, while he took good care to be Thomas Macrae as far as Toronto, he became something else from that point on, — George Smith, James Macdonald, anybody but Macrae or Hallowell. He had studied that subject in Quebec, and had made himself quite an artist in the matter of disguises.

And now, kind reader, while these two are travelling towards Hickory Hall, I ask a favor of you. I am not of the stuff to throw red pepper into your eyes: will you please blindfold yourself, therefore, and take no note of the mile-posts, stations, changes of cars, and other indications of the route? Let the journey continue, no matter how long, no matter in what direction, no matter on what road or roads.

It is at last one o'clock on a March night: a lukewarm spring rain is drizzling, slowly dropping, soaking all things, its damps penetrating into offices and cars and beds. An old man descends wearily from an incoming train, and asks a porter when the next train departs for Hickoryville.

"First one, 5.30; next, 8.01."

"How long a journey is it?"

"One hour." These railroad men never say "miles," but "hours" and "minutes."

A young man also alights, grasps a sleepy hotel porter by the arm, slips a half-dollar into his hand, and says, —

"See that old gentleman? Take his hand-bag, and get him to your hotel at once."

The porter is a little surprised. He would have done his duty without extra incentive, but the half-dollar makes him exceeding dutiful. He grasps Ephraim Hollins's luggage, and shouts, "This way, sir!"

Before he could gather up his sturdy Canadian resistance, Ephraim Hollins found himself seated in a wet, reeking "'bus," rattling over as vicious a pavement as ever was laid.

Presently the porter opens the door, and calls out, "Bunkum House, sir," and hands him into the office of "the only first-class hotel in ——."

The old man goes to his bed mechanically. The porter is doing his thinking for him, — so much, at least, as pertains to his immediate wants.

"Wake me for the 8.01 train," says Mr. Hollins.

"Yes, sir — cert'nly, sir."

Meantime the younger man perambulates the great waiting-room at the depot; he refreshes himself where he can; he smokes his Fumar or two; he is weary, enraged, broken down, re-invigorated, sick at heart, revived, all in such quick alternations and successions that he feels the very life bounding in him at a rate which suggests old age. He looks in a mirror to see if gray hairs are perceptible, and then laughs at himself.

The weary hours drag along. At last, however, there is a feeble announcement, "Train for Here, There, and Hickory."

Cautiously he looks through the one coach. No Ephraim Hollins there. A second time, even, he scans the faces of the eight or ten passengers, looking for disguises.

"*Peste!*" he says to himself. "What need for Mr. Hollins to disguise himself?"

Every man in the car, except himself, goes to sleep. He takes advantage of this, and in a trice becomes once more, not Thomas Macrae, but E. P. Hallowell.

Hickoryville at last, and daylight.

CHAPTER XXX.

A RACE.

AT Hickory Hall they are ready for business at half-past seven A.M. At that hour Mr. E. P. Hallowell was announced. He greeted the doctor cordially, and had a hearty, taking way of making excuses for so early a call. Not an allusion did he make to the missing letters, not an unsafe question did he ask. On the whole, the interview was a pleasant one; and it may as well be acknowledged that Dr. Peterson was carried away with this man of the world, and even admired him.

A little after eight Ben was sent for. He shuffled into the office in his fashion, gazed about for a moment, looked at the visitor with opening eyes, cried out, "O Tom, Tom! where is Betty too?" and flung himself into his old friend's arms, weeping and sobbing.

Dr. Peterson, accustomed as he was to emotional exhibitions, turned away, and trimmed a rose-bush in the bay-window, his fingers trembling, some of his nerves tingling.

Macrae — or Hallowell — turned to the doctor to say one word anent "Tom."

"A pet name, doctor, which all my brothers and sisters have called me by ever since I can remember."

Could Dr. Peterson deny it? Can even a scientific man be expected to know every thing? the thoughts of a man? the spirit of a man? his heart and reins? Ben's use of the name, therefore, actually passed for a corroboration of the doctor's belief in his "improvement." It was a going back into the realm of reality, of the living, truthful, practical past.

Mr. Hallowell was in haste, it seemed. He was anxious to take a train at 9.05 southward. So Dr. Peterson ordered his own carriage up, saying, —

"I want Ben — you see he has a pet name, too, Mr. Hallowell — to go down in better style than in that lumbering railroad carryall. I shall see you off too."

Two attendants were set to work upon Ben's trunk; and at the proper time a party of men, gathered about the doctor's carriage, gave vent to their sorrow at Ben's departure, in a fashion not usual in this world, but none the less affecting.

"Uncle" Babbage thrust a paper, quite secretly, into Ben's hands.

"A bagatelle," said he softly. "A mere bagatelle, Ben! My check for three million eight hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars and ninety-eight cents, to pay your little extras!"

"Merry" looked sadly on, standing a little apart, balancing himself, and at last remarked, "I, too, had horses, and a carriage — pshah! you ought to have seen that carriage" —

As the carriage rolled away, poor little Schmidt followed it with his eyes, — his gold spectacles, rather,

— and quietly said, "I am more meeserabble, efery day. Meestare Merry, do you t'ink that I shall efare go home?"

"Foo-foo!" laughs "Merry." "I, too, had a home and a wife — pah! what sort of a wife is she, to leave me here, and destroy my business!"

The little drama of leave-taking is over. Its first act, a few kind words to Ben; its second, third, fourth, fifth, and the very epilogue, an exhibition of the egotism of insanity. Consider, all egotists! Literary egotists, financial egotists, religious egotists, all, of whatever profession or sort, — think a little!

Safely seated in the South-bound train, Macrae glows with triumph. And what a triumph!

To give zest to it, to exalt it, to abase it, to degrade it to the semblance of a brutal, contemptible crime, the connecting train from the west comes bounding up to the very side of the coach in which Macrae and Ben are about to take their departure for the unknown. It is two minutes past nine. An old man carefully steps to the ground, looks about, calls a carriage, and disappears. Macrae pales a little, but he makes no sign. Dr. Peterson sees this old man also, and discerns from his questions and gestures that he is probably asking about Hickory Hall. If so, it is his business to be there.

There is a cordial hand-shaking, Ben says, "God bless you, doctor!" and the doctor repeats, "God bless you, Ben!"

The doctor goes away with that blessing ringing in his ears, the conductor of the train waves his hand.

and in two or three minutes more the last rattle of wheels is heard at Hickory station.

In the office at Hickory Hall Dr. Peterson finds Ephraim Hollins, pacing up and down, impatient. He opens his business at once, saying, —

"This despatch will serve to introduce me, doctor." He hands Bly Folliss's telegram to Dr. Peterson.

"And this letter," — surgeon Braddock's, — "to explain my errand here still more explicitly."

"I see it all, sir, at a glance," said the doctor. "I have been deceived. Can you endure a shock? Are you strong enough, sir, to bear one stroke more?"

The old man trembled. Piteously he held up his hands, and almost abjectly he asked, "Not dead? My son is not really dead? These new hopes are not to be crushed like the old ones?"

"No, your son is not dead. I must break it to you gradually, sir. Be strong, and we will right this matter. Your son is gone."

"Gone!" screamed the disappointed father. "How? and whither? When?"

"Not half an hour ago. We must be wide awake, sir," said Dr. Peterson, tapping his bell.

Rapidly he told the old man the circumstances of Ben's coming, and of his departure.

"I saw the tickets which Mr. Hallowell purchased at the station," he said: "they were through tickets."

"Here!" he added to the boy who had answered the bell. "Take these despatches as fast as your legs can carry you. Ask Felcher to send them immediately."

These messages were sent to the chief of police of ——, and to the conductor of the train, asking for the arrest of two persons, — sufficiently described, — on such a train, or on its arrival at ——.

Then the two in the office at Hickory Hall went into a multitude of details. We need not spell them all out: we know them already.

At last Mr. Hollins said, "But this man who took Ben away! I can imagine almost any one bringing him here, to relieve himself of the care. But this constant paying his charges, and the final abduction of my son, — these are mysteries to me!"

"I will describe him: perhaps you may be able to detect him," said the doctor.

With anatomical, physiological accuracy and clearness, the description was given. Step by step, feature by feature, hue by hue, a complete image was built up in Ephraim Hollins's mind. He bowed his head upon the desk, and groaned. "O Thomas! Thomas Macrae!"

"Your son called him 'Tom' this morning, sir."

"It is he! I wish there were a doubt of it," answered the old man.

Not a word did he say of Betty Hartley or of the partnership. For very shame he kept silence. It was not necessary to parade all this before the doctor.

At noon a despatch came from the conductor of the train: "I think, but am not certain, that two persons left my train at Hillbury Junction."

"What am I to do?" asked the suffering old man.

"Remain here, Mr. Hollins, at least until we hear

from ——. It is not at all certain that the two persons referred to in this despatch are the ones we want. Should they be found in ——, it will be necessary for one of us to go on immediately; and I think it will do you good to go, and reclaim your son, and hand this rascal over to justice."

"Say nothing harsh of him, doctor, I beg. Not yet, not yet," said Mr. Hollins.

Poor old man! his love and respect for Thomas Macrae clung to him yet.

He remained at Hickory Hall all that day. He visited the wards, he heard all about the chevaloscope, and discovered who it was that positively did not "run away with Charlie Ross." He looked over Ben's room, and filled it with gentle, subdued lamentations. He even asked, when night came, that he might be allowed to sleep there. He saw poor Payson, recognized him, and was shocked to hear him complain to the attendant, "Take me away! hide me! That is Ephraim Hollins of Millington! He is come to kil' me. He carries knives, I tell you, and revolvers. He is the avenger of blood. Hide me!"

The old man's heart was torn by such sights and sounds; but his intelligence rose superior to that, and he looked gladly upon the convalescents, talked with them, and with the doctors and attendants about them. In the evening a flood of light came over him.

"Doctor," said he, "if I had had the sense, the knowledge, the consideration, I ought to have had, these wretched sorrows would not have been."

Dr. Peterson said nothing.

In the morning a tardy despatch came from ——, announcing that no arrest had been made, no such persons as Dr. Peterson described been seen.

And why? Simply because Thomas Macrae was wide awake. He had indeed purchased tickets for ——, and had taken particular pains to have Dr. Peterson see them. But Macrae did not intend to use them. Instead, he paid the conductor, in greenbacks, the fare to a point twenty miles distant, where another road crossed the one upon which he and Ben were travelling. Trains both ways connected with their train within an hour. Quietly he took Ben out upon the platform at the Junction. Not another passenger disembarked. There was no one, in fact, to take note of them, but a hard-worked, indigent creature, who was depot-master, express-agent, telegrapher, switchman, postmaster, — and it might be said truly, *population* of Hillbury Junction.

Soon they were whirling away again, this time south-westwards. Through a rolling country, a vast mingling of extensive plains soon to be alive again with nodding wheat and plumed corn, of hills standing out of and amid the plains, snowless already, and of forests black and dead, standing like great stacks of bayoneted guns to-day, to-morrow to put on the green of a new springtime, to wave with life, to remind you of a great army after bivouac, and again on the march; through towns and cities, villages and hamlets, they went; by the side of brooklets swelling with the pride of flood-time, tearing seaward with their temporary abundance; along the banks of sluggish inland rivers,

moving lazily as if in protest, not deep enough to be navigated, not clean enough even to quench one's thirst.

To Ben the panorama presented sixty delights every hour: to Macrae it was purgatory. On and on they flew, for many hours. Three times they "doubled," — that is, changed cars, and went off in some new direction. Macrae studied his guide-book well. He had planned out a geographical arc with many twistings and turnings, with the instinct of a cunning fox pursued by honest dogs. Ever his thoughts turned to one point, a point agreed upon already between himself and Tim Brannigan. But "no violence! now, no violence!" he kept repeating to himself.

As the days wore away, — for this journey consumed a deal of time, — he became accustomed to that word, "violence," and he fell to thinking of Brannigan.

"Let him do what he likes!" he said: "why should I care?"

A favorable spot was reached at last, — a great city, where he felt secure. He telegraphed to Toronto, —

Goods will be delivered at Rochester on Monday.

I. B. MANN.

"Goods!" sniffed the Toronto operator, to whom Tim Brannigan's name was not unknown. "Jimmies and skeletons, probably!" Nevertheless, the despatch was duly delivered.

On now to that agreed point. It was early on Monday morning, that Macrae and Ben left the cars, — half-past six o'clock, an hour when few are stirring

in that dismal station. The incoming of a train creates a slight ripple. Rumpled women and tumbled men alight and disappear. A clatter of trunks is heard, a whistle or two, and the train moves on, leaving silence again behind it.

At the same moment two villanous characters were holding consultation in a train coming eastwardly. One of these was Tim Brannigan ; the other an equally debased and miserable creature from Fly Street, Buffalo. There were a thousand such men in the slums of Canal and Rock Streets, and around "the Points" at large, to pick and choose from ; but Tim Brannigan only wanted one, and took this one because, as he expressed it, he "knowed all about Rochester."

"You go down Lake Avenue," said this Buffalo villain, "till you come to the end of the horse-railroad. Then you turn down a road towards the river. Follow your nose around a sharp turn, and you go down the hill to Buell's landing. My eye ! w'at a placè for a lark ! A feller could slip off there, an' never know w'at hurt him. Feller 't' I used to know slid down there one night, an' them police act'ly got out a warrant for him, an' was a-goin' to hev him 'rested ; an' there he was, a-layin' among the rocks, deader'n a pine-board. An' he was a nice feller too !"

Brannigan ought, as per agreement, to have been in Rochester on Sunday. "Goods on Monday" was intended to cover that. But Mr. Brannigan was accustomed to having his own way. He had had too good a time in Fly Street to tear himself away, and considered that the early express of Monday would

bring him into Mr. Hallowell's company soon enough.

Not finding Brannigan in waiting at the station, Macrae determined to visit a low establishment in Front Street whose name Brannigan had put him in possession of.

But what to do with Ben? A bright thought, — Ben must be hungry. He took him into the railway restaurant, therefore, ordered a thoroughly respectable breakfast for him, bade him stay until he returned, — counting still on Ben's old habit of implicit obedience, — paid for the breakfast in advance, and went out.

He was hardly out of the station, when a small man, all lungs and with very little head or leg to speak of, went the rounds, bawling in a way to make you utterly deny St. James's assertion that "the tongue is a *little* member."

"Charlotte train! all aboard for Charlotte! Goin' on this train?" he asked, poking Ben with his stick.

Ben was off his balance in an instant. Confusion spread itself over and through him. He arose from his chair, and stared through the open door.

"This way, be sharp now!" cried the official bawler. "Train's almost off." He pushed Ben through the gates, almost dragged him across the tracks, and never let go until he had landed him on the platform of the Charlotte passenger-car.

With the consciousness of having done his duty in a fashion which ought to make the whole directory of the road proud and happy, the bawler returned to the restaurant.

"That fellow didn't get his breakfast," said a waiter. "Paid for too."

"S'pose I eat it for him, then," said Bawler. "Pretty bad night for him, I reckon," he added. "Awfully dazed!"

"Crazy!" said the waiter.

"Crazy?" asked Bawler doubtingly.

Macrae was gone longer than he anticipated. On his return, great was his surprise not to find Ben. A half-dozen queries put him in possession of the facts, however, and he found himself face to face with this question: Should he drop the matter now, and seek the future in some distant country? or should he follow Ben?

If safety had been his only consideration, he would have chosen the first of these alternatives; but Macrae was now possessed of a spiteful, hating demon. He had more revenges than one to wreak before he would stoop to think of himself. The heart of this man had become perverted: his judgment went with his heart simply because they had been companions so long.

It was no difficult matter to follow Ben. Charlotte is the port of Rochester at the mouth of the Genesee, and but seven miles distant. A carriage would take him thither almost as quickly as the rail. He learned all this in ten minutes. And, just as he was leaving the station to go on this errand, the early express from the west came in, and Tim Brannigan whirled himself into Macrae's arms.

There was a hurried consultation between the two, ending in the ordering of a carriage.

"Who is this?" asked Macrae, with reference to a man of repulsive aspect, who hung back, but had some evident purpose in keeping not far from Brannigan.

"A friend of mine," answered that worthy.

"Dismiss him."

"Can't do it: 'twouldn't be safe."

This was more than Macrae had bargained for; but when was it ever known that a man with such an object as Macrae's did not get more than he bargained for? It was of no use to resist. He took his place in the carriage, and his two companions followed.

At Charlotte, Brannigan had a plan of action.

"Go you over there, and stay, Mr. Hallowell. I'll find him if he's in the town."

Ten minutes thereafter Tim and his companion were in intimate discourse with an old acquaintance. It came about, we must say, quite by accident.

"Brannigan, is that you?" were the words which startled him, and set him to thinking that he was not out of reach of Toronto eyes, and must mind his goings and comings.

"Oh-h, Misther Porty!" he replied, "what's up?"

"Nothin' ain't up, partickler," said this nondescript half-Yankee, half-Canadian; "nothin' excep' fust trip."

"What are ye goin' to be captain uv dhis year, Misther Porty?"

"'Ontario Belle,' same as las' year."

"Is she a brig?"

"No: a schooner. See her out there?"

The "Ontario Belle" was rocking in the stream, two of her men rattling the blocks with a lazy pull.

"It's murdherin' cowld for a trip, isn't it?" asked Tim.

"Cold? No, man: the ice is almost all out. We've got a joker aboard too: you'd laugh your sides out to hear him."

"A joker?" asked Tim Brannigan. "What's dhat?"

"A kind of a crazy feller that came down on the train this morning. Says he lives in Toronto, and so I'm goin' to take him over."

Brannigan pricked up his ears at this, and winked at his friend. Surely crazy men, running about at large, and coming from Rochester on that particular train, could not be very numerous; and here must be the object of their search.

New elements entered then into Mr. Brannigan's calculations. Here was a chance for a stroke of business. Ben was safe on board the vessel. What reason could he, Brannigan, give to Capt. Porty for delivering up Ben to him? Better, thought Brannigan, to persuade this Mr. Hallowell that Ben is utterly out of his way, get the reward of my pretended misdeed, — or cajole the money out of him some way, any way, — send the Buffalo man home, and then — make something else out of Ben hereafter. The plant was too good to be lost.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE FIRST ARRIVAL.

IN this chapter, much ground — and some water — must be covered with few words.

First, it must be related briefly, that Ben was the subject of many good-humored comments on the Charlotte train, and that this ticketless and penniless traveller went to his journey's end right royally. His confusion became less, however, as he stepped upon the platform, which is at once railway-station and steamboat-landing at Charlotte. The place was strange to him, but there was at least quiet.

Presently a little knot of idlers, railroad-men and sailors, gathered around him. Now, Ben had an unmistakable Canadian air, — his speech bewrayed him also. And, as if to lead him on, the name of Toronto was spoken in his hearing, as it may be heard almost any minute on that dock.

"Oh, yes!" said Ben: Toronto, to be sure; I think Tom said we lived in Toronto."

This interested Capt. Porty. The captain had not a bad heart: he could even do a charitable act, and not ask any one to say "thank you." Capt. Porty, therefore, offered to take Ben over the lake. The "Ontario Belle" was to sail that very afternoon.

Secondly, a gap in our narrative must be filled up, by the return of Ephraim Hollins to his home. Cast down, disappointed, grieved at the heart, not only by the loss of his son but by the vileness and ingratitude of another, he yet rose far above any little criticism of all humanity. He was not the man to sour against the whole world because of one sorrow or of the discovery of one bad man.

And as for Ben, Ephraim Hollins had faith to believe in the ultimate recovery of his son. He was alive: that was a great point.

The affair was quickly laid hold of by the papers; the police took it up, by or without request; a substantial reward was offered for information; all asylums were notified, steamships were searched; in fact, every copse and cover into which the fox and his prey might have retreated was penetrated, except the "Ontario Belle" schooner, plying between Toronto, the port of Genesee, Sodus Bay, and Coburg. The hounds came within one hundred feet of her, but there was water between them and the scent.

Thirdly, it must be related that Tim Brannigan sought an interview with Thomas Macrae, — that is to say, Mr. Hallowell, — at Charlotte, two hours after their arrival there, and entertained that gentleman with a circumstantial account of an accident which had settled the whole business. According to Brannigan's fiction, Ben had wandered about after the arrival of the train, gone out upon the light-house pier, been blown off into the water, and drowned. Mr. Brannigan's imagination was not wholly consist-

ent with itself in this romance: but jaded, worn, tired Thomas Macrae strove to be satisfied with the story as it was told him; and having, for peace' sake, paid his rapacious but so far legally innocent partner a goodly sum of money, he returned to Rochester.

Why and wherefore, no man will ever know; but Macrae took train for Suspension Bridge that same evening, and thence travelled to Toronto. No *rationale* of such a step has even plausibility to support it, except this: that he had determined to play once more the game of conscious innocence. If Ben were really dead, after all, and not by crime but by accident, what might not happen even yet? As a despoiled bird will linger around the nest whence her eggs or her young have been ravished, so Macrae seemed drawn to haunt the border-land of his crime, to lie in hiding, in some sort of ambush, waiting and hoping.

And his revenges too: they, perhaps, were sweet to think of! He was not done with Tim Brannigan yet.

Fourthly, we have another word to say as to this same Brannigan. He, the Buffalo villain, and Capt. Porty determined to make a day of it. Money happened to be plenty. The means of "making a day of it" — that sort of day — are also to be found in Charlotte.

By noon Mr. Brannigan was in a state compared with which Ben's was sanity itself. Capt. Porty, however, kept his head, and, at the time of Mr. Brannigan's total collapse, witnessed something which excited his alarm.

Two Rochester policemen came upon the scene. They took note of Capt. Porty and his companions, and finally asked questions. They were sounding an honest man, however, and discovered that fact instantly. They even believed Capt. Porty when he averred that Tim Brannigan was one of his men, and that he was anxious to get him aboard the "Ontario Belle." And these innocents lent a ready hand in the difficult business of carrying the helpless fellow to Capt. Porty's boat.

As to the Buffalo individual, he was the only game left for the officers; and on the principle of "take what you can get, when you cannot find what you want," they escorted that poor, guileless man to the stone building up the river.

The day following, at almost any hour of the morning, Brannigan came on deck in a bewildered, miserable condition.

Said he to the captain, who was also helmsman of this noble craft, "Where wuz you yestherday, Misther Porty?"

"Where was I?" answered the captain. "I think it's where was you, Misther Brannigan. With the police a-hunting that Buffalo chap up and down the streets! And what better could I do than to put you aboard this schooner, and take you out of mischief?"

A great cake of ice struck the schooner's fore-quarter, and the shock sent Brannigan all abroad. "Oh, murther!" he groaned, "anny place on dhry land is betther nor dhis. And dhe rollin', Misther Porty—what a head it gives me! And how mortial cowld it

is! And — in dhe name of all dhe saints in T'ronty, who's dhat?"

Ben's head was visible just above the deck of the protruding little cabin.

"That?" said Capt. Porty. "That's the crazy chap."

"What crazy chap?"

"The one I told you was on board, yesterday."

The captain's attention was called forward. Slipping a leash around his tiller, he left Brannigan to his woes and to meditation.

Towards evening Tim's wits were considerably sharpened.

"Misther Porty," said he, "do you happen to know dhe widdy Buckler, in King's College Square?"

"Never heard of the lady."

"What! not dhe great widdy Buckler? She's richer nor ole Budger himself."

"Much good that does you an' me, Tim."

"No; but don't be in sich haste, now. She had a crazy boy, an' he's runned away. There's a reward on him: I don't know the sum exactly; but in my opinion it's yours and mine, Misther Porty."

"You mean *mine*, don't you, Tim?"

"No: I mane what I say, — yours *and* mine."

Capt. Porty was one of your easy-going, unpersistent men. Rather than quarrel, he would give up a point any day. So Tim had his way.

We must now take a look at "The Alderney."

Here were three young gentlemen, whom the Toronto young ladies knew as "the Amicable Triad," the "Ho-

ratii," and under numerous other *sobriquets;* and whom we know as Bly Folliss, Germaine Parson, and Jack Brandon. Discoursing they were, according to their custom, of things in the heavens and things in the earth, occasionally mentioning even girls.

The talk was drawing near to the exhaustion point. Its last refuge was the unusually early opening of spring. Picking up the new binocular, Brandon levelled it towards the lake.

"There's a schooner coming in!" he exclaimed with an amount of interest which it may be difficult for dwellers by the sea or in agricultural regions to understand.

You must know, then, that dwellers on the Great Lakes look for the first vessel as the denizen of the country looks for the first robin. It is the sign of coming summer. And although old Winter sometimes swoops down upon them with Jack Frost, and gives them an additional nip or two, the lake people laugh him to scorn.

This year, in the violent gales of February, the ice had broken in Erie, and had gone crashing and grinding past the crazy wharves of Waterloo. Following it was a long procession of frost-bowlders from St. Clair and Huron, pouring into the Niagara, and rolling on with impetuous haste, as if eager to taste the salt of ocean before final dissolution, perhaps to meet their cousins, the bergs, from the still farther North.

With a tumult always grand to witness, they sweep down the accelerating current, bounding over the falls into the seething caldron below. Rising and falling

there in fierce contest, such of the floes as are not ground to ice-dust sail on until caught near De Veaux, where they accumulate, and stand a while in grim silence. The on-coming tide presses more and more tightly upon them, until, with a roar as of April thunder, the "ice-jam," as the natives call it, gives way, and there begins a new race towards Ontario and ocean.

Sounds of calking-irons are now heard: steams of pitch and tar perfume the air not unpleasantly. There is an opening of office-doors along the docks, a brushing-up of ledgers, desks, and sample-boxes. Shrill whistles of tugs cry out, "Here we are!" and all the signs of reviving trade greet you.

Some little overplus of this interest came even into Bly Folliss's rooms at "The Alderney."

"For a walk, fellows, let us go down to the wharf," said Parson.

One look at the vessel, as she clumsily took her berth, was enough for these young gallants. They were turning away, in fact, when Folliss's attention was called to a singular-looking couple leaving the schooner. One looked like a gentleman; the other might be any thing but a gentleman.

These two passed close to Bly Folliss; and one of them, — the gentleman, — from having acquired some nautical lore on his voyage probably, addressed him, —

"Oh, yes! where do you hail from?"

There was a look in the eye, a something in the air, of this gentleman, which excited Bly. He felt that

here was one of the unfortunate, and he gave his pity without asking.

The companion of this pitiable man was for pressing forward. Grasping Ben's arm, he said, "Come on!"

The action was objectionable to Folliss. It betrayed haste: it was accompanied by an insolent look and tone.

"Stop!" said Bly. "Who is this?"

"Who is it?" answered Brannigan. "Who wud it be but dhe widdy Buckler's son, an' me a-thrampin' dhe wide world for him, to bring him to his disthracted mother!"

Turning to Brandon, Bly said, "It came into my head"—

"Oh, yes!" said Ben (for of course it was no other); "oh, yes! you want your head examined, eh?"

And quicker than thought Bly's hat was off, and Ben looking for his "veneration," "secretiveness," and "comprehension."

The loungers about the wharf took in "the fun" of the situation, and a dozen heads were uncovered for the manipulation of the "doctor." That title still clung to him; and he finally arose to the full dignity of it by waving his hand, and advising them all to take "two gallons of whiskey and four ounces of quinine before breakfast," which the idlers thought would be great fun.

Bly Folliss had no desire to court unnecessary trouble. Brandon was pulling his sleeve, and bidding him "come out of this;" Parson had sauntered away a

few steps; and Brannigan was anxiously looking for an opening in the crowd, that he might hurry Ben away: but still Folliss lingered. This man interested him.

"I say, Jack, there isn't much to go upon, but somehow I connect this man with young Hollins. I never saw him more than once: I wish I could recollect him more distinctly. Let's see this through."

Instantly he turned upon Brannigan, and asked, "Are you sure that this is widow Buckler's son? Isn't he young Hollins of Millington?"

The effect of this question upon Brannigan was the same as that of a round of grapeshot upon a company of soldiers at breakfast. It hurt him, it astonished him, it scattered him.

"What is your name?" asked Bly of Ben. Bly was getting his guns in position now, and had ammunition in abundance.

"Well, now, as to that I couldn't exactly say; but if Tom Macrae was here, now — Oh! they call me Ben sometimes."

"Enough!" said Bly. "Here, you" — He turned to look for Brannigan. The custodian of "widdy Buckler's son" was turning the corner of the street with rapidity.

The interest in the arrival of the first vessel was indeed slight in comparison with that which Ben's arrival occasioned. The winter ice of Ben's life was going out rapidly now: soon it would disappear altogether.

The gorge was yet to be passed, and then our Ben shall find calm waters, shall be forever beyond "the winter of his discontent."

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE GORGE.

CARNEY DUGAN witnessed the arrival of the three discoverers and Ben at "The Alderney" with an astonishment which produced at once a singular effect. Instead of rejoicing, she began to lament. Give this kind of people a death in the family, and all the bottles in the neighborhood are speedily filled, to be as speedily emptied again, and there are sounds of revelry: give them a returned son or daughter, and you would imagine, from the wailings and howlings, that dire calamity had overwhelmed them.

The gamut of Carney's cries on the present occasion need not be traversed. It was not melodious to the ear, nor was there any harmony in it to satisfy the mind.

Folliss wearied of her *do-re-mi* after a while, and put an end to it thus: —

"The question is, Mrs. Dugan, what are we to do with him?"

"It's yourself as'll be takin' him home to his father, Misther Fully," answered Carney.

"It's meself as'll do nothing of the sort, ma'am," promptly spoke the young man.

Bly had a vision of an old gentleman gushing over

him with tears of gratitude, and possibly having hysterics. He was not fond of "that sort of thing." He had his plan, therefore, and was coming to an announcement gradually. Wisely, and yet foolishly, he arranged the final step of Ben's restoration to his home. And, by the way, how nearly the wise and the foolish in us are allied! — almost as close together as the sublime and the ridiculous, which are separated by that one celebrated step.

"Mrs. Dugan," said Folliss, "you are the best person in this company to do this office for Mr. Hollins. Come, now, don't stop to cry about it. Go and get your best raiment on, and we will put you on the train, with a blessing."

"An' when, Misther Fully?"

"This very evening, — the seven o'clock train, — seven something. You will reach Millington at eleven or twelve, — the very best time: there won't be such a commotion as there would be in the daytime."

About five o'clock that afternoon, Harper had occasion to go to the telegraph-office at Millington. As he stood conversing with the operator the click was heard, which is the same to a telegrapher as "I want you," or "I say," would be between the uninitiated.

"Toronto," the operator said.

"Wait a minute, Harper! A message is coming for Mr. Hollins."

He wrote, and handed to Harper, this: —

"Your — son — will — be — sent — to — you — on — the — seven-thirty — train.

"BLY — FOLLISS."

Harper had the contents of this message before its rightful owner, against the law, against propriety; but law and propriety go to the wall in such cases.

Harper flew to the mills. Mr. Hollins was still at the office. No son, no new partner, was there to help him; and aged as he was, sick and sore at heart, business demanded him. He read the message, and cried out, "The horse, Harper, quick! and come with me to Elmswoods."

Down in Toronto the six-o'clock bells had rung, and Ben had been regaled with a kind of "high living" which would have delighted Delorme's soul only to look at, much more to taste.

The sun set at ten minutes past six; but they have a genuine twilight in Toronto, and at seven it was still light enough for the Adelon girls and Giles Barry and all their flock to be parading; and, truth to tell, Bly was a little scrupulous about being seen with Ben. It is dreadful — awful — to be seen by the Adelon girls under such circumstances!

Furthermore, Carney had come into the possession of so many detached portions of Mrs. Blossom's and other ladies' wardrobes, that, when arrayed in full multiform, — uniform would be a wholly inappropriate word, — she was quite a bird-of-paradise to look at. The Adelon girls would have danced their pretty little feet off if they had seen the "Three Monks" on the street with Carney Dugan.

"We will go on," said Bly, therefore, "and you follow with Hollins, Mrs. Dugan."

As she set off with her charge, Carney felt anxious and hurried. Ben, on the contrary, was neither. He had contracted a habit, also, during his period of aberration, of keeping a step or two in the rear of any one with whom he was walking.

At the corner where you turn out of King William Street into Cœur de Lion Street, Carney turned to look at Ben, and to quicken his pace. He was nowhere to be seen.

She stood gazing into space for one minute, then lifted up both hands, and made a speech to the bystanders: —

"It's but wan man in dhis whole wurruld could 'a' done dhat; an' it's Thomas Macrae. Oh—h—h! Thomas Macrae, it was all lookin' fair an' best for you, an' now ye must go on murtherin', an' desthroyin', an' hangin' yersilf, an' Misther Ben, an' ivery wan uv us! Oh—h—h, the day dhat I live to see dhis!"

She ran to the station as rapidly as her poor old limbs would permit. "Bod luck, — bod luck!" she cried. "He's gone, — he's gone, Misther Fully."

"Bad luck!" exclaimed Bly Folliss. "It's bad luck for you, old woman."

He suspected treachery on Carney's part at once.

"But you can't prove it, Bly," said his temperate friend, Germaine Parson. "Let her alone. Come! The police must have the case now, and at once."

"I wish I hadn't sent that despatch. It's awfully cruel on old Mr. Hollins."

And so it was. Waiting, waiting in an ecstasy of

joy: dashed to the ground, at eight that evening, by a second message. It was too much to be borne.

Ephraim Hollins was at Elmswoods, and had Harper and two of the mill-men with him, when the second despatch from Folliss was brought in. He read the words of postponement, and sank to the floor.

Jean-Jacques says that "souls know no sex." And men do, for a fact, become exceeding womanly when offices of the soul are confided to them. These three sturdy workmen, therefore, lifted Ephraim Hollins very tenderly, and bore him to a sofa. One rang the library bell; and, in the tide of women which flowed in at the summons, among ladies and servants these three men mingled, not as men, but as vying with the others in gentle offices.

We are on the wings of the wind now. We fly back and forth like electric sparks. From Elmswoods to Toronto is one minute of distance and time. Perhaps Germaine Parson will some day evoke out of the diploidoscope a means of transporting the bodies and portmanteaus of men in a similar fashion.

Your pardon is asked: once more the necessities compel me to take you into disreputable company. Thomas Macrae had been at "The Prince of Cumberland House" for a day. Tim Brannigan was there also. The two had now new plans of evil. Macrae's mind was disordered with hate, and with that species of self-condemnation which is not satisfied with repentance, but which must needs increase and intensify itself with new injuries to others. He determined to speak his mind to Bly Folliss, to give Carney a specimen of his vengeance, and then to fly.

For this double purpose he kept a watch upon "The Alderney." Great was his astonishment when he saw Ben Hollins enter, in the company of Bly Folliss and his two friends. He hurried to the "Cumberland," and charged Brannigan with the worst of treachery. But Tim was coolness itself compared with Thomas Macrae, and assumed such an air of astonishment, and repeated his story of the drowning with such detail and vehemence, that finally Macrae was thoroughly deceived, and fell into a belief that Tim had been misled at Charlotte.

Again they entered into partnership; and, for his own reasons, Brannigan was as active in the business as Macrae himself. Separately they approached the scene of operations, — Princess Christina Street, West. And as the twilight came on, Macrae's heart leaped; for the door of "The Alderney" opened, and Bly Folliss stepped out upon the street. "Oh for five minutes with that fellow!" thought Macrae. But Germaine Parson and Jack Brandon followed Folliss; and Macrae, perforce, stood still.

But there is no need that this man, in his extremity, should possess the genius of a plotting Richelieu. Events, times, and circumstances are doing his work for him: they have arranged themselves in most satisfactory order. The poor little figment of a fear of the Adelon girls sends Folliss and Parson and Brandon out of the way; and here comes Ben Hollins, shuffling along behind that stupid, blundering old woman, and walks straight into Macrae's hands.

A mere touch upon the shoulder, a whispered,

"Come, Ben!" a quick movement around a convenient corner, a quiet, rapid walk, an entrance into some by-passage of Mrs. Brannigan's hotel, and all was accomplished.

Mrs. Brannigan had from time to time been somewhat disturbed at the repeated visits of this superior man, for men of his class did not commonly register at her house. She was not slow to discover his slight intimacy with her son; and she had ample reason for suspecting that young man, even if he was of her own flesh and blood.

This evening she found new cause for alarm. Who was this whom they were bringing into her house? Another gentleman.

But what was the strange look, what the peculiar manner, what the indecision in attitude and gait, which her quick eye detected in the new-comer? And why should they hustle this young man out of sight in such haste?

She watched them, therefore, very closely; and as the two did not return from the up-stairs regions, whither they had gone, she examined the key-board, remarked a certain number, and listened at the door of a certain room. They were whispering, talking in the lowest discernible tones; but Mrs. Brannigan gathered enough to excite her ire. Without scruple she knocked, and volubly demanded admittance. She denounced Macrae to his face; he, meantime, striving to get her attention.

"Come out of this, now, and down-stairs wid you both!" she exclaimed. "The house is bad enough;

but it's no place yet for the hankerin' (?) of murdhers and abdications and such wickednesses."

As they filed into the public room, the helmet of an officer of the law came within Tim Brannigan's vision; and that worthy swung himself lightly out of a window, and disappeared. Macrae, however, had never literally run away from anybody, and did not know how to begin.

Mrs. Brannigan eagerly addressed the officer, and, for emphasis' sake, laid hands upon Macrae, crying out, "Dhere's mischief a-brewin' here, Misther Sixty-eight; an' it's not my Tim as is in it, but dhis gintleman!"

"Oh, no, mim!" answered No. 68. "Not at all, mim: your son is too much of a h'angel, he is, for any o' them doin's. Why, I've knowed 'im, myself, any time these five year."

As a fox-mother might defend her young one, even with the feathers sticking to his lips, Mrs. Brannigan replied, on Tim's behalf, "Yes, an' never knowed a thing again' him, neither!"

"No, *mim!*" said Bobby. "He never does nothin'; *he* doesn't."

No. 68 had not come there to converse with Mrs. Brannigan. He had a tolerably accurate description of Ben in his head, and recognized him at once; but he would have liked very much to see Tim Brannigan also, who needed only the small amount of describing which Bly Folliss and his friends had been able to give.

"I want a boy to go of an errand, Mrs. Brannigan," said No. 68.

Boys were numerous in that region, and one was forthcoming instantly. No. 68 scribbled upon a piece of paper, "Come with barrier" — meaning probably the boy.

"Take that 'ere dockymunt to Mr. Folliss at 'Th' Alderney,' young feller; an' don't you let no grass go to seed on the way, now. You want to be back here in about four minutes!"

Macrae saw signs enough of the approaching storm. He sauntered watchfully towards the door, not liking after all to face Bly Folliss, if that gentleman had been sent for. And, as for No. 68, he cared little for Macrae's motions. Nothing had been said to him about Macrae. It was only Ben and Tim he wanted. Bly Folliss and Germaine Parson had no knowledge, indeed, of Macrae's presence in Toronto.

Macrae reached the door, and opened it, undisturbed. Even Mrs. Brannigan said not a word to prevent him; for, if he was arrested, what might he not say, or be compelled to say, to the hurt of her son Tim?

As he went out into the darkness, he stumbled over a great package, a bale of goods, a body, something lying upon the door-step. He uttered an execration, and turned to look upon the thing which had thrown him head foremost to the sidewalk. It was a woman.

"What's the matter with you, woman?" he asked. "What are you lying there for? Are you drunk?"

— "Dhe matther wid yerself, ye uncivil billy-goat! What size boots are ye thrampin' aroun' in, like a

roarin' lion? Oh, murther, but me ribs is all in splinters wid 'em! Take yer han' aff me!"

Macrae recognized Carney; while she, doubled up with pain, was not even looking at him. He laid a vigorous, fierce hand upon her arm: he was minded to twist and bend it, to take her by the throat and suffocate her.

He, too, was grasped while these awful temptations were struggling to come to the birth as full-fledged deeds: he looked up, and his eye met Bly Folliss's.

"You here, Tom?" said Bly.

"Why not?" he gasped. "What right"—

"Never mind that, Tom. Let go! you are hurting that old woman. Now, Tom, see here, old fellow, your game is up. The whole thing is out. For old times' sake, I say — Go! Cut and run for it, just as hard and as far as you can; and I, for one, will say nothing. Take my advice, Tom."

But the man was infatuated now with anger and chagrin, with the overthrow of all his patient plans. He stopped to parley.

"Are you going in here, Bly?" he asked.

"Yes, I am."

"What for?"

"To take charge of young Hollins, and restore him to his parents."

"You shall do no such thing, Bly Folliss. He is under my charge; and I was on my way home with him, and sent him over the lake with a responsible man, agreeing to meet him here. And you and your cronies must needs interfere; and here I am now

suspected of all sorts of misdeeds, and the police set upon me! And this miserable old creature here dogs my very footsteps. She is housemother, down there at your imitation Carleton, isn't she? And it's you, probably, who inspire the old witch."

"Tom, don't be foolish: will you go to Millington with me to-morrow morning?" asked Folliss.

"That's my affair."

"Very well, old fellow."

Macrae's blood was up. For very shame he would follow Bly Folliss into the tavern now, if he died for it.

No. 68 had just finished a very interesting conversation with Mrs. Brannigan as they entered.

From a very beaming remark upon the relative merits of allspice and "the leastest little sprig of cinnamon-bark," — which latter article was floating upon a mixture whose last drops he was just swallowing, — No. 68 had branched off to a question as to what "that 'ere gentlmn as jest went out was a-doin' here?"

The hostess assured him that he was only a friend of her son Tim's. No. 68 volunteered to say that he "looked a leetle more genteeler than them kind of folks generally does," — leaving Mrs. Brannigan's mind in distress, — and asked what "the gentlmn's name" was.

"Machin," responded Mrs. Brannigan, relying entirely upon information of her precious son.

"Oh, ho! Machin — eh? Well, that settles it."

No. 68 was in the act of scrawling something in his note-book, when the party of gentlemen entered. He

sprang to his feet at once, and advanced towards Macrae.

"Mr. '*Allowell*," said he, "you're wanted!"

"Wanted!" whispered Macrae.

"Yes. You're a spictitious character. The banks is a lookin' around for you. You ain't took no money, you know; but the banks has been set up to watchin' you, for fear you will take some. An' they wants to get a good picter of you beforehand. You'll go along o' me, Mr. 'Allowell, or Mr. Machin, or w'atever your true name may be."

It was a cruel blow. Macrae felt the degradation of it even more than he had felt the shame of that which brought him into contact with Folliss outside.

But Folliss was equal to the emergency. He took the policeman aside, and half persuaded him, that, as he had no charge against Macrae, he had better let him go.

"Yes; but don't ye see," he said, "all them 'Allowells is a reputitious lot. H'I think that 'Allowell's 'is real name, after all. I knows the family, ev'ry one on 'em. Mebbe I should be sorry to see one on 'em took up, but prewention's the medicine for them kind."

Bly crossed over to Macrae, and whispered, "Tom, for God's sake go! If he attempts to arrest you, I'll trip him up."

"I won't, I tell you! Let him do his worst. I won't be ruined by a parcel of gossiping people and a miserable Bobby like that!"

No. 68 touched Bly's arm to remark, "H'I'm fot takin' on 'im h'up, *now*."

"You can't, you know: you have no substantial charge against him," said Bly.

"Can't I? W'y, 'e's a-threatenin' and a-offerin' to disturb the peace of her gracious Majesty! I heard them words of his'n."

He looked halberds and maces and battle-axes at Macrae while speaking. "Bobby," indeed! Her gracious Majesty was not to be insulted after that fashion.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE BREAK.

MACRAE arose from his chair; and the pent-up passion of four years — nay, perhaps of his whole life — came to the surface at one leap. It whirled him along upon its resistless current. It was grand to see him: so Bly Folliss says. He stood erect; his good blood, his gentlemanliness, his education, his brilliant ability, all asserting themselves. In one moment they fell, collapsed in utter ruin, and left him standing there a fiend. The transformation was something awful: so Bly Folliss says.

"A pretty lot you are!" he cried in the voice of a madman. "A pretty lot! A man cannot undertake the care of a poor lunatic, but he must be followed about and spied upon by a miserable scarecrow of a policeman, a Bobby!" he screamed, "and talked of as if he were committing a crime. Now let" —

"See 'ere, young feller, you come along o' me. I've got a charge again' you now, any ways." No. 68 advanced towards Macrae as he said this.

It would have been an exhibition of double acrobatics if Macrae had "come along o'" No. 68. For, the instant the representative of her gracious Majesty touched him, a helmet, a club, a note-book, half a

dozen apples, and No. 68 rolled over the floor. With a crash that made every heart in the room beat faster, the "Bobby's" body struck the bar, and curled itself up in an awkward heap. Opposite was Thomas Macrae, brought to bay, his eyes glaring wickedly, his attitude one of defiance.

"Brannigan," he cried, "come in here, and do your duty!"

But Mr. Brannigan had conceived a new notion of his "duty." He had promised to stand by Macrae, thick and thin; but he concluded to erase the "thick" from the contract.

Long before, Carney had hobbled into the room; and she had silently been looking on, appalled at Macrae's fierceness. With the best intentions, and even with some of her old admiration, she now approached Macrae. Softly she spoke to him: "Whisht, now, Misther Thomas! Be aisy, dear; give over, an' lave dhis. Meet me on dhe pos'-offy stips, an' it's Carney Dugan as'll lif' you out uv all dhis throuble."

Shame, shame! to be spoken to in this confidential fashion by such a woman! Macrae glared at her as a wounded tiger at a man with medicine in his hands.

"Stand off, you old beggar! It is you who have brought all this upon me: don't whine about it now!" he cried, pushing her away.

"It's not me dhat's whinin', Thomas Macrae," she replied: "it's yure own father an' mother dhat's speakin'; it's yure grandfather an' dhe whole race of Macraes of Briartop in Derry, tin miles from dhe

Scotch Fairms; an' it's manny's dhe time, Misther Thomas" —

The rest was never spoken. In the blindness of his rage, Macrae flung her to the floor, hissed some half-intelligible malediction at Folliss, Brandon, and Parson, who were gathering together in rather warlike fashion, and fled from the house.

No. 68 was beginning to collect his suspended senses, as Macrae disappeared. He was for having the whole power of the law brought to bear at once upon "that 'Allowell," believing that her gracious Majesty had suffered serious hurt and damage.

"Go and find him," said Brandon. "Go at once, or you'll lose him."

"He's a h'awful powerful chap, now: 'e've got a grip like a cockerdile," said No. 68, rubbing his aching arm, and backing out of the whole business.

Poor Carney was carried into Mrs. Brannigan's parlor. She was not much hurt, only a little bruised. Cold water externally applied, and a little of Mrs. Brannigan's spirits (hot, and with an extra sprinkling of nutmeg) applied otherwise, soon set her to rights again, — that is to say, to talking.

Carney had, however, but fairly begun what would undoubtedly have been one of her lengthiest speeches, when the voice of Mrs. Brannigan was heard.

"And what's to be done wid dhis one?" she asked, pointing to Ben.

"We'll take care of him," said three warm voices in chorus.

And now Bly Folliss's courage was up. No more

fear of the Adelon girls. No more fear of the inevitable scene at Millington. He, and he only, would see Ben Hollins safe in his father's arms. A despatch was sent announcing their coming, and next morning Bly and Ben departed.

And fully half an hour before the arrival Ephraim Hollins entered the Millington station; and not alone, oh, no! There was a crowd of mill-men and citizens also. Harper had told the news. Sandy Dart stood in the front rank of those who pressed forward to catch the first glimpse of "Mr. Benjamin." Sandy was anxious to "bat a t-t-tan pun noat" on some issue or other, but none presented itself to his mind.

And now, at the first far-off sounds of the approaching train, necks were craned and twisted. Pairs of eyes peered eagerly down towards the curve, just as if Ben would surely come in riding on the pilot, and waving a Union Jack.

"Whoo-oo-oo! who-who-who!"

The train had come. There was a great rustling of boots, a scrambling of mill-men to the very edge of the platform, from the locomotive to the end of the train. Harper had told the news to good purpose.

Apart, and in quiet dignity, stood an old man with locks now whitened by an age of uncomforted sorrow. His very face was still covered with the veil of that same sorrow. There was not yet any sign of the old gladness in it; no, nor can be, until — until —

"Ah! Ben! my son, my son! I *see* thee now! Dear Ben!"

These words, and no more. The old man's arms go round his son's neck; and with one great sob, and one look of gentle wonderment, Ben cries out, "Father!" and his arms twine round the old man's head.

It was a sight to see the great brown hands of workingmen go up to those hundreds of watery eyes, — to see them try to smooth away the quivering of their lips!

A stranger in one of the coaches of the now departing train looked out, and asked, "Some one dead?"

"No, SIR! alive again!" was the answer.

The stranger could not make it out; but he read the story in the papers, perhaps, a week afterward.

Soon the sense of re-possession of his son came fully to Ephraim Hollins, and his thoughts returned from his own overwhelming joy to the every-day affairs of life. Turning to Bly Folliss, first of all, he said, "You will forgive me, my dear sir!"

"No excuses, I beg, Mr. Hollins. I have only done my duty, and am sorry it was so bunglingly done yesterday."

Mr. Hollins took Folliss's arm, and began to move towards his carriage. Bly held back, however, protesting that he must return to Toronto on a train which even then was signalling.

Mr. Hollins would not listen to this, and Bly pleaded urgent business.

O Bly Folliss! Business! What a business man you were, to be sure! You diligent, hard-working butterfly, spreading your beautiful wings all day long, and

hunting all the world over for pretty flowers to feed upon! Well, you did one fair stroke of business in your life, at all events. We forgive you the rest, and bless you.

It was useless to say "No" to this persistent old man. He would have his way. "I shall never be forgiven at Elmswoods, if I let you go," he said; "and, besides, the train is moving."

This amicable dispute ended, Bly yielded himself to Mr. Hollins's dictation, and presently found himself an honored guest at Elmswoods, and witness of a scene the very thought of which would have frightened him almost to death the day before.

"If you believe me, fellows," said he to Germaine and Jack, on his return, "I boo-hooed like a baby. You'd have thought Hollins was my own brother!"

In point of fact, Bly Folliss did not deserve to be made a hero of: he had only come into the cast at the last moment, and here the whole cornucopia of benedictions was showered upon him. But let us reflect. These good people at Elmswoods must have some object upon whom to pour out all the thanksgivings and gratefulness of their hearts. You could not expect them to take back Ben with a mere "Thank you, sir," or "Very much obliged."

And Bly Folliss, without knowing it, without meaning it, stood as the representative of all who were concerned in the act of restitution. The Kimbers, Carney Dugan, the police of "the States" (well-intending, but human, after all), Dr. Peterson even (whom Folliss had never seen), — he represented them all, and was

on the top of the wave. It happens in this way in human affairs very often.

Bly was keenly alive to the situation, however, and cut short the hospitalities of Elmswoods.

"Besides, fellows," said he, in his account of all this, "that girl!"

"What then, Bly?" asked Brandon.

"What then? Hum! Tom Macrae went overboard, you know; and Bly Folliss is mortal also!"

"But not a rascally impulse is in his heart!" cried out Parson and Brandon in one voice.

"No; but, fellows, she is a magnificent girl. Here's to a wedding at Elmswoods! The doctors at Hickory Hall prophesy it, — have prognosed the case, so to speak. That's pretty tall language for me, fellows."

In the quiet resumption of daily duty the Elmswoods family found life a very different affair from the dull, heavy, sorrowful round of the two or more past years. It was the keenest of pleasures to watch Ben, to see him growing day by day in all the elements of strong manhood. Dr. Peterson, too, came up from time to time, and spoke with increasing confidence. The whole household, in a word, was filled, permeated, with one glowing thought, — Ben is getting well.

About this time, any time you please, Ben read "The Globe" regularly, looked into books, made excursions with his friends, grasped the right and wrong of things, comprehended *pros* and *cons* with ever-increasing clearness.

True, the sun did not shine upon him all the time. Luna took a peep at him now and then, and Ben's wits made little discursive flights.

But the awful sadness of it was shaken and gone. Ephraim Hollins roared when Ben told him once, — only once in all that time, — that he might scatter the megrims by taking two gallons of whiskey and about four ounces of quinine before breakfast. They all had a moment of merry laughter the day that Ben took Betty's head in his hands, and pronounced the formula, "Attachment, large; courage, immense; self-esteem, — ha, ha! combativeness, very good, — regular fighter; hope, almost the size of your whole head, I should say; amativeness" —

"Now, Ben" —

Ben was quite out of sorts that day; and, being disturbed in his passing delusion, drew up his coat-collar as these dear friends had never seen him before, exclaimed, "Now, don't you" — and took himself off hurriedly.

It turned their gladness into grief for an hour; and, indeed, there were many hours of perplexity and doubt. But almost every day the aged father could say, "Mother, Ben is better."

Weary enough it was waiting. Slowly the desired end approached, but surely. Finally, on a July day, a year and four months after his return, there came to one and all a complete, joyful, untrammelled sense of the ending of all their doubts and pains.

Said Ben, —

"Father, I am well!"

"Mother, I am well!"

"Betty, I am well!"

Dr. Peterson came up to Elmswoods, and Surgeon Braddock with him. With one voice they said, "Yes: Ben is well."

The servants took it up, the gardeners, the farmers, the mill-men, the citizens of Millington. It seemed as if the birds in the air were singing it, the sheep and lambs bleating it, the very dogs bow-wowing the joyous news, —

"Ben Hollins is well!"

CHAPTER XXXIV.

COMFORT LODGE AT LAST.

OH, how cheerily Betty Hartley tripped it in these days! She sang sweet little snatches of melody, gliding from song to song, — a verse of this one, a line from that one, a triumphant strain from another. No single one of them all was sufficient to fill out the great joy and purpose of her young soul. And Ben brought to her an offering of lower chord-notes, adding to her rippling *mezzo* a bass, a baritone, a tenor. This universal genius did not know one of these voices from the other: he sang at random.

Betty was never vain of her personal appearance, but now she fell to looking into the mirror daily and steadfastly. "Poor pale things!" she would say, pinching her cheeks. "The color must come back to them now, for Ben is well. I wonder whether Ben likes best white cheeks, or red."

If people *speak* their thoughts, they must submit to being answered.

"Red ones!" cried Ben, therefore. "And, when I don't find them so, I make them so; so there [a smack on this side], and there [a smack on that], and there, and there!"

They opened Comfort Lodge one day.

"Hullo!" said "B" to "H." "They are letting in the light. Wake up!"

A deal of renovating was done in that snug abode. Furniture was overhauled and set in order; swollen carpentry, windows, doors, casings, put in smooth running condition; hangings re-arranged.

There was news in Millington. The tall archdeacon had become a bishop now, and it was said in Millington streets and offices that "his lordship" was coming over to perform the service.

"Just in time!" shouted Bly Folliss, as two friends walked into his parlor. "Hollins writes that he is to be married Tuesday week. Says, 'Come up, sure; and bring your friends Mr. Parson and Mr. Brandon.' That means you: do you understand?"

The wedding-day came at last. A delicious morsel of the summer preserved for the especial purpose of giving Ben and Betty a warm, sunshiny start in the new life, that October morning brought smiles and good-humor with it in abundance. Sandy Dart was grandiloquent. Old Mother Ballam was dusting the pews at St. Peter's up to the last moment, and, as Sandy and his wife came in, said, "A morning to you, Mr. Dart, and a morning to you, Mrs. Dart. Be'n't it gran' an' glorious to see the han' o' God laid so gentle an' good on our Mr. Benjamin? God bless him an' his sweet lass!"

"Amen!" said Sandy.

What need that we should describe this wedding? Please to imagine that the trousseau was as you like it best, that the church was "crowded to overflowing,"

that the bride was "lovely" and the groom "fine-looking," and all the rest of it.

Mr. Alexander McKechnie, Q.C., was present, and had brought certain papers to be signed. If you ever meet this celebrated queen's counsel, he will make you sign a paper before you leave him, you may depend upon it. These particular papers Mr. Hollins had taken from the legal gentleman, and laid away in a drawer of the library-table. At the hour of signing, Ben, Betty, and Mr. Hollins were standing by the table, Mr. Hollins having first laid a packet there.

Alexander McKechnie suddenly lifted his eye-glasses, and said, "God bless me, Hollins! ah! — these — ah! — these documents!"

Mr. Hollins quickly looked over his lawyer's shoulder at the papers spread out before him, and exclaimed, "Oh, excuse me, McKechnie! those are not the papers. Will you be good enough to destroy them?"

"George the Third," "the statute in that case made and provided," "the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars," and "the partnership between the aforesaid Ephraim Hollins and the aforesaid Thomas Macrae," went into the waste-basket in tatters.

A shade of pain passed over Ephraim Hollins's face, but Ben and Betty never knew what caused it.

A month after the marriage of "Mr. Benjamin Hollins of Millington, Ont., to Bertha, only daughter of the late Col. Davenport Hartley, R.A., and granddaughter of the late Admiral Beswick Hartley, formerly of Chistow, Hants, and late of Millington, Ont.,"

a party of four might have been seen wending their way to the Grand Trunk station, Toronto.

"Farewell, Parsy, old boy! Don't come back from Germany with spectacles, now."

"Spectacles?" said Carney Dugan, who was one of the four. "More like he'll come wid a roomfull of plagueyscoops an' bugs in his pockets."

"Look out for him, then, Mrs. Dugan, and at least watch him well until you leave him at Queenstown. After that he'll have to take care of himself."

The train moved away, bearing Parson and Carney, and leaving Folliss and Brandon behind waving hats and sending blessings with their boon companion, the overflowings at least falling to Carney.

Another month, and another party of four were dining at Bly Folliss's apartments at "The Alderney." Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Hollins sat at the sides, Mr. Bly Folliss at the head, Mr. Jack Brandon at the foot, of the table.

"They got off safely, then?" asked Hollins.

"Yes: I have a letter from Parson, written on the steamer, and sent in by the pilot. He says, 'Carney stood by me as the ship swung out into the stream. "Good-by," she cried, "good-by, ye ill-assorted lan' o' beggars an' plenty! But Peter an' Pathrick forgive me! If I hadn't come to you, sure I'd never 'a' got back again. An' now it's dhe goin' dhat throubles me."'

"Farther on, Parson says, 'Carney is full of blessings on Mr. Hollins's head for sending her to Arboe. She has gone to the steerage now; but I shall go

down to see her every day, unless'— Yes,' adds Folliss, as he thinks of Parson in the throes, "unless!"

The dinner is over, and Folliss and Brandon are left alone.

"Jack," says Folliss, "I was tempted to tell Hollins what I found in the last 'Galignani.' It came this morning. I'm powerful glad, as the Yankees say, that I kept it to myself. Listen!

FATAL AND SINGULAR AFFRAY.

[We receive the following, just as we go to press, and are obliged to insert without the usual correction.]

MÜNCHEN, 1mo Avril.

As two party of young English emerge from M. Quatresous' café, the evening of yesterday, they have encounter a party of officiers militaires. By what cause no one is intelligent, but the word of anger was to pass very loud, when a pistol go off in firing. On the instant Lieut. Baur was falling down dead. The English were fled.

The police did find one at Mavlik's, on the Kaufinger-strasse. He was gone, by cause of taking his leave most quickly, to M. Mavlik's great astonishment. The other of the two party was of the name — Thomas Macrae, Derry.

P.S. Macrae have been found, having been come to Mavlik's at two o'clock, bleeding. Lieut. Baur have discharge his pistol at the same moment. Macrae receive the ball, and have died this morning.

"There, Jack," added Bly, "that is the sequel to a transformation which you and I were witnesses of; and the ending of a fellow who might have been — of the best."

There was silence in Folliss's apartments for a moment, broken by Brandon at last.

"Bly," said he, gravely and sententiously, "love is an awfully dangerous thing!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Jack, you are refreshingly original. Don't you know, yet, that half the girls in Toronto are madly in love with your own dear self?"

"Then, Bly, I am safe: I shall never go into an insane-asylum. But I am frightfully sorry for the girls."

And Jack Brandon, thirty-two years of age, with a vow resting upon him never to marry, a sort of lay celibate, covered his head with a cloud of smoke from a fragrant Partagas, and was silent.

The following morning a carriage rolled along the Elmswoods avenue, and up to the door of Comfort Lodge. Here were three elderly people waiting to receive the two new-comers, Ben and Mrs. Ben Hollins. Man and wife, after many years of sad waiting, these two now clasped each other tenderly, their smiles and tears mingling more sweetly than printed words can tell. It is the perfume of those smiles and tears which lingers yet around Comfort Lodge. It is the gravity born of all that waiting and sorrow that makes the atmosphere of Comfort Lodge a little — only a trifle — unlike that of other young people's homes.

But the compensation is also present; and a sedate, unruffled happiness has entered into Comfort Lodge, and there is no enemy to touch it with rude and hostile hand.

To know the depth of such joy, betrothed ones, one

of you must go to Hickory Hall for a time: the other must wait and watch. May God keep you both from such a trial! May he give you some other source of happiness!

At dinner, the day of return, Ben asks, "Did you send that wedding-cake to the patients at Hickory Hall, father?"

"Yes, Ben: we had a special one made, — a huge one; and on the frosting we had the confectioner write, in letters made of bright gold dollars, —

DOCTOR BEN.

I wrote to Dr. Peterson, requesting him to expend the money for the benefit of the poorer patients."

"What a 'party' there must have been!" says Ben.

And all join in subdued merriment; for all have heard, long ago, of Delorme's famous entertainment.

"And you did not forget Debby Kimber?" Ben inquires.

"You may be sure we did not, my son."

The dinner is over: the older ones have returned to Elmswoods. Ben and Betty are alone. It is Betty who first finds speech.

"Home at last, Ben!" she says, "and in Comfort Lodge."

"Yes, Betty," Ben whispers back. More boldly he says, in his old, manly way, "Yes, and may comfort lodge here with you and me now! For we have sorely needed it. And, by the same token, may it come to all this world, and grow and increase, until all sorrow and sickness are driven away!"

A LAST WORD.

IT is but just to the medical fraternity, the public, and himself, that the author should say that this book is in no sense to be mistaken for a *Treatise on Insanity.* It is only a story.

And yet these pages were not written without an object. And if they shall have helped strong, healthy men and women to a kindlier, truer idea of a great and unfortunate body of their fellow-creatures, that object will have been sufficiently attained.

"Doctor Ben" himself is a little anxious on one point. He fears that he has been painted in too high colors. Between you and me, this is not so. Have I made him out any thing more than a man? And in very truth Ben Hollins of Comfort Lodge puts to blush the saying, — "Things are not what they seem," at least so far as that line applies to living men. What he is he seems, and what he seems he is. And, to play with the tenses a little more, he thanks God daily that he is not what he was, but what he had been.

And if any should think that the writer has left truth too far out of sight in some portions of the narrative, let him merely say in self-justification, that, on the contrary, it has been painful enough in some instances

to write down very facts, — words really spoken, deeds really done.

And if Hickory Hall shall seem to be idealized somewhat, in the eyes of both professionals and laymen, we beg that at least it may be looked upon as the coming institution, and its medical chief as the coming healer of the Doctor Bens, the Giants, the Elder Babbages, and chevaloscope-inventors of this troubled world.

United States Hotel,

BOSTON.

For more than Half a Century,

THE OLD UNITED STATES HOTEL,

of Boston,

has maintained its respectability and excellence.

Originally the largest Hotel in Boston, it has been twice enlarged years ago, by the extensive wings on Kingston and Lincoln Streets, named respectively Oregon and Texas.

During the past five years it has been under the management of

MR. TILLY HAYNES, of Springfield, Mass.,

who has completely renovated, enlarged, and improved the property, and last year added still another hundred rooms, by building across from Texas to Oregon.

Think of a Hotel from Texas to Oregon, and you will understand why this notice is written, which is to say that the UNITED STATES recommends itself for its quiet, orderly management, and the notable character of its guests, its numerous public rooms and grand old parlors, broad halls and numerous stairways, while none of its 500 Guest Rooms are above the fourth floor.

These, with its very central location, its most excellent table and moderate charges, recommend it to all who have once shared its hospitality.

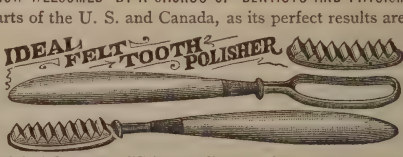
THE TRUE AND NATURAL PRINCIPLE

For Cleansing and Preserving the Teeth and Polishing the Enamel

IS NOW WELCOMED BY A CHORUS OF DENTISTS AND PHYSICIANS

In all parts of the U. S. and Canada, as its perfect results are known

A PERFECT POLISHER OF THE ENAMEL.



A GENTLE STIMULANT TO THE GUMS.

A THOROUGH CLEANSER OF THE TEETH.

Avoids all the well known Irritation and Discomforts and Injuries of Bristles. A blessing to adults. A delight to children. More economical, *more cleanly than harsh bristles.*

WHAT LEADING DENTISTS SAY.

Dr. Geo. F. Smith, D.D.S., Chicago, Ill., writes:
"I find it very satisfactory, and shall recommend it to my patients, especially to juveniles."

Dr. J. P. Carmichael, D.D.S., Milwaukee, Wis., writes:
"The more I use your Ideal Felt Tooth Polisher, the more I am impressed with it. As a polisher for the teeth, and a means of hardening the sensitive gums, it has no equal."

Dr. Chas. H. Goodrich, D.D.S., St. Paul, Minn., writes:
"Your invention possesses a feature which seems to me important; viz: The enforced cleanliness arising from periodical change of the Felts. After a short time a tooth brush becomes foul and hurtful; but all this the Felt Brush remedies."

Dr. W. Geo. Beers, D.D S., Montreal, writes:
"It ought to be a luxury as well as a stimulant to use the Felt Polisher, constructed as it is, and I believe that with that and the Floss Silk between the teeth nothing better can be relied upon."

GLEANINGS FROM OUR MAIL.

Mr. John S. Moffitt, of the Richardson Drug Co., St. Louis, Mo., writes:
"The goods are selling rapidly. I find the Felt Brush to be all that you claim for it; and in a word is a ready cleanser and polisher."

Etna, Pa., June 11, 1888.

Gentlemen. — I am well pleased with your Ideal Felt Tooth Polisher. After using it my teeth are *smooth* and have a *lustre* which *cannot be obtained* by the use of *bristle brushes.* Please send me two more, cost enclosed, as my family wish to try them. Truly yours, N. SPANG.

Burton, O., June 19, 1888.

Gentlemen. — The box of Felts was duly received, payment enclosed. I have used the Ideal Felt Tooth Polisher for three months and find it indispensable to the toilet. Very truly yours, HELEN R. FORD.

ECONOMY, BENEFIT, AND COMFORT.

First cost, 60 cents for holder and box of 18 Felt Polishers; latter only need be renewed, 25 cents per box; holder imperishable. At all Druggists', or mailed by

HORSEY M'F'G CO., UTICA, N. Y.

By the Author of "THE STORY OF MARGARET KENT."

SONS AND DAUGHTERS.

1 vol. 12mo. $1.50.

"The author's style is as clear cut as an intaglio, and the story is worth a whole wilderness of that fiction which analyzes and dissects and converts life into a vast clinic." — *Philadelphia Record.*

"There is no end to the list of good things, and to the pleasure coming of its knowledge of human nature, of its culture, art, and taste. Its portraiture, description, and dialogue, are exquisitely delightful." — *Boston Globe.*

"This novel will be found more attractive than any society novel which has been published for years. We have in mind in saying this both Mr. Howells and Mr. James. From the first chapter to the last the fascination of the story grows upon the reader, and one lays the book down with the feeling that here is a novel bright, intellectual, amusing." — *Providence Journal.*

"I think the studies of Forbes, Miriam, and Mrs. Reese, all three, exceptionally true and fine. It is a brave book, a story which searches out the by-ways of the heart, and is strongly and fearlessly told," says LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.

REBECCA HARDING DAVIS says: "It certainly is the cleverest, most brilliant society novel, which I have read for many a year. Polly is incomparable."

For sale by all booksellers. Sent post-paid upon receipt of price. Catalogues of our books mailed free.

TICKNOR & CO.,

BOSTON.

AGATHA PAGE: A PARABLE.

A new novel. By ISAAC HENDERSON, author of "The Prelate." With a beautiful portrait of the heroine, photographed by Henry Dixon & Son, of London, from the celebrated painting by Felix Moscheles, and imported by the publishers expressly for this work. 12mo. $1.50.

"A story that is singularly strong, rich in incident, and absorbing in interest." — *Cambridge Tribune.*

"Refined and artistic." — *Cincinnati Commercial Gazette.*

"Dignity and delicacy." — *Boston Transcript.*

"Mr. Henderson's style is strong, compact, and restrained, while lacking neither grace nor fire." — *Boston Advertiser.*

"Rich in color and personality." — *Quebec Chronicle.*

"Remarkable artistic beauty." — *Boston Home Journal.*

"Refined strength." — *Pittsburgh Bulletin.*

"Here, then, is a true heroine, a story that leaves a good taste behind, and a series of really fine pictures drawn with a sure hand. The interest of the reader is excited from the first, and is maintained to the end. 'Agatha Page' is an auspicious first among the summer novels — first not only in time, but also in solid merit and as a literary work of art." — *The Beacon.*

Sold by Booksellers. Sent, postpaid, on receipt of price, by the Publishers,

TICKNOR & CO., Boston.

MR. HOWELLS'S LATEST NOVELS.

THE MINISTER'S CHARGE.

1 vol. 12mo. $1.50.

"A novel full of breadth and strength, of racy and delicate humor, thoroughly American, a genuine democratic novel," says George P. Lathrop, in the New York *Star*.

INDIAN SUMMER.

1 vol. 12mo. $1.50.

The Chicago "Tribune" also finds this subtle characterization: "The city to which Mr. Howells leads his readers is not the revelling, brilliant Florence of Ouida. It is rather the Florence of Hawthorne, — quaint and dreamful. The story reminds one of a plant which grows in Old-World gardens, — so unobtrusive it is, and yet so rich in suggestion, so subtle-scented."

Twelfth Thousand now ready.

THE RISE OF SILAS LAPHAM.

By W. D. HOWELLS. $1.50.

"'The Rise of Silas Lapham' invited more discussion than any serial since 'Daniel Deronda.'" — *Publisher's Weekly.*

"The dust of his writings is fine gold. Delightful in its perfection." — *Philadelphia Record.*

"The high-water mark of Mr. Howells's great and unique photographic genius." — *Pall Mall Gazette.*

"A work of genius; a great and perfect work of its kind." — *New York Star.*

NEW EDITIONS OF MR. HOWELLS'S NOVELS. ($1.50 each.)

A MODERN INSTANCE.
DR. BREEN'S PRACTICE.
A WOMAN'S REASON.
A FEARFUL RESPONSIBILITY.

"There has been no more rigidly artistic writing done in America since Hawthorne's time." — *The Critic.*

Sold everywhere. Sent, postpaid, by

TICKNOR AND COMPANY, Boston.

LIFE OF HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

Edited by Rev. Samuel Longfellow. 2 vols. 12mo. With 5 new steel-engraved portraits and many wood engravings and fac-similes. In cloth, $6.00; in half calf, with marble edges, $11.00; in half morocco, with gilt top and rough edges, $11.00.

"Altogether the most fascinating book that has been published for months. It is full of the most interesting and picturesque and poetic things." — *Boston Record.*

"One thinks of the gentle scholar as a man who can never have made an enemy, or lost a friend; and we lay down his autobiography (for such the book can fairly be called) with a feeling that in these posthumous pages he has opened a view of his own soul as beautiful as the creations of his fancy." — *New York Tribune.*

"It is an admirable piece of biographical work, and the story of the poet's career gives a view of the growth of American literature that is full of instruction and interest. It is a book that is sure to become a classic both in this country and England, and, indeed, in cultivated circles throughout the world." — *Boston Budget.*

"It is needless to add that the publication of these noble volumes is the literary event of the day, that all continents will greet it with delight, and that coming ages will quote it affectionately in recalling that Longfellow was not only a pure and great poet, which is much, but also a pure and great man, which is more." — *The Beacon* (Boston).

"These volumes tell the story of his life with exquisite taste; they also unfold a panorama of the literary history of America, and are among the rare and monumental books of the present century." — *Chicago Inter-Ocean.*

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE AND HIS WIFE.

By Julian Hawthorne. With portraits newly engraved on steel and vignettes. Two vols. 12mo. In cloth, $5.00. Half morocco or half calf, $9.00. Edition de luxe, numbered copies, $12.00.

The fullest and most charming accounts of Hawthorne's ancestry and family; his boyhood and youth; his courtship and marriage; his life at Salem, Lenox, and Concord; his travels and residence in England and Italy; his later life in America; and his chief works and their motives and origins.

"It increases my admiration for the character of Hawthorne and my respect for his genius as an author." — *R. H. Stoddard, in The Critic.*

"The most charming biography of the year, pure and sweet from beginning to end." — *The Beacon* (Boston).

"Colored with the very hues of life, and bearing the signature of truth. The reader will close the book with a new admiration for the pure-minded and honest gentleman who was the greatest original writer our country has produced." — *New York Tribune.*

"And so the inspiration left behind by this biography is that of increased happy faith in the power of high, disinterested love to transmute the prose of daily life into poetry, to give beauty for ashes, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." — *Boston Herald.*

"Leaves on the mind of the reader a clear perception of Hawthorne's moral and intellectual character, a vivid impression of his personal traits, disposition and habits, as manifested in the alternations of work and play, in the study, in the family, and in society, and a singularly distinct and life-like image of his person." — *George William Curtis, in Harper's Magazine.*

TICKNOR AND COMPANY, Boston.

See what the critics say of

A Romance of Colonial Massachusetts.

AGNES SURRIAGE. By EDWIN LASSETTER BYNNER, author of "Nimport," "Tritons," "Damen's Ghost," etc. $1.50.

"The best novel that has come out of Boston this generation" — *Kate Sanborn.*

"Picturesque and dramatic, — a genuine historical romance." — *George Parsons Lathrop.*

"I have derived much enjoyment from Mr. Bynner's book; it has strength and manliness." — *Julian Hawthorne.*

"A romance passionate, picturesque, and dramatic, full of strength and originality." — *Portland Press.*

"The blue waters of Massachusetts Bay sparkle through its pages, and the storm-winds are seen whistling across Marblehead harbor, in the quaint old days of the Bay Colony. Bynner has in this romance begun a work for our lovely sea-coast such as Sir Walter Scott did for the islands and glens of Scotland, covering them with the rich and enduring glamour of poetic association."

FORCED ACQUAINTANCES. A Book for Girls. By EDITH ROBINSON. $1.50.

"Delightful and amusing, — a lively sense of humor throughout." — *Quebec Chronicle.*

"Fresh, wholesome, uncommonly witty, and entertaining." — *The Capital.*

"Of a healthy influence, and of charming interest." — *Boston Home Journal.*

"If Miss Robinson can keep on as well as she has begun, she has a brilliant literary future before her." — *Boston Courier.*

"The book is a thoroughly healthy one, and can go on the shelf of a young girl's library beside 'The Old-Fashioned Girl,' 'Little Women,' and 'The Daisy Chain.'" — *Boston Transcript.*

TWO GENTLEMEN OF BOSTON. 1 vol. 12mo. $1.50.

George Parsons Lathrop says that the author of "Two Gentlemen of Boston" has a great deal of direct, impressive force, uncommon power of vivid narration, graphic skill in depicting; and the book "reminds one of the self-absorbed narration of Miss Burney's 'Evelina,' of Emily Brontë's masterpiece, 'Wuthering Heights,' and of Jane Austen's microscopically realistic accounts of daily life."

For sale by all booksellers. Sent, post-paid, on receipt of the price, by the publishers,

TICKNOR AND COMPANY, Boston.

TWO NEW VOLUMES BY WHIPPLE.

AMERICAN LITERATURE and other Papers. By EDWIN PERCY WHIPPLE. With an Introduction by JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER, to whom the volume is dedicated. 1 vol. 12mo. Gilt top. $1.50.

This new volume of the great essayist's works contains his famous Centennial articles on American Literature; two articles on Emerson; a brilliant monograph on Starr King; the now classic review of Daniel Webster's Oratory; all written with that finished elegance of style and affluence of incident and anecdote for which Whipple was always famed.

RECOLLECTIONS OF EMINENT MEN.

Sumner, Choate, Agassiz, Motley, George Ticknor, Barry Cornwall, George Eliot, Matthew Arnold, Ralph Waldo Emerson.

1 vol. With portrait of Mr. Whipple, and Dr. Bartol's Memorial Address. $1.50; in half-calf, $3.00.

"A positively fascinating piece of reading." — *Hartford Courant.*

"The incidents with which he crowds his pages make it flash with brilliancy and at the same time represent the man." — *Independent.*

"A flashing eloquence of style and a delicate discrimination — most engaging and ably written." — *N. Y. Telegram.*

"No English critic ever surpassed Mr. Whipple in the precision of his judgments, the entire calmness of his reasoning, the perfection of his pictures, and the luminous clearness of his style. His essays are not an introduction to literature, but the very essence of literature itself" — *The Beacon* (Boston).

New Edition Just Ready.

LIBER AMORIS. A Metrical Romaunt of the Middle Ages. By HENRY BERNARD CARPENTER. Gilt top and rough edges. $1.75.

David Swing says of "Liber Amoris:" "It is unique, rich, lofty, and beautiful. Great as is the empire of books, reaching from classic times to the present, and including all languages and races, and all the styles of thought and emotion, yet there is a place for this 'Liber Amoris,' — a place which no other work of art can fill."

"The story is very beautiful, and it is beautifully told. . . . A noble addition to our genuine poetry." — *Courier.*

"A poem of lofty conception, of beautiful imagery, of a power seldom known in modern verse." — *Traveller.*

"It is full of sweetness and light, and studded with rare gems of thought and expression. It is emphatically a great poem." — *Herald.*

Sold by booksellers. Sent, post-paid, on receipt of price, by the publishers,

TICKNOR AND COMPANY, BOSTON.

BOSTON PANTS CO.,

111 CHAUNCY STREET,

BOSTON, MASS.

PANTS TO ORDER, ...	$3.00
SUITS TO ORDER, ...	12.88
OVERCOATS TO ORDER, . . .	12.88

That our efforts have been appreciated, the continued growth of our business is ample proof.

We do our business in a simple, straightforward manner.

Our finer grades of garments to order at the same low proportionate price.

If you cannot call, send six cents and we will mail you samples of our different grades, with rules for self-measurement.

Mention this book and we will send you, free, one of our Lead Pencil Novelties.

Every garment made in our own workroom by competent tailors, and a perfect fit guaranteed.

BOSTON PANTS CO.,

111 Chauncy St.

BRANCH STORES:

105 Market Street, Lynn, Mass.

3 Central Street, Newcomb Block, Salem, Mass.

184 Essex St., Lawrence, Mass.

TICKNOR & CO.'S CHOICE NOVELS.

Forced Acquaintances. By Edith Robinson $1.50
The Devil's Hat. By Melville Philips 1.50
Two Gentlemen of Boston 1.50
Two College Girls. By Helen Dawes Brown . . 1.50
A Muramasa Blade. By Louis Wertheimber . . . 3.00
Agnes Surriage. By Edwin Lassetter Bynner 1.50
Sons and Daughters. By Henry Hayes 1.50
The Story of Margaret Kent. By Henry Hayes . 1.50
The Prelate. By Isaac Henderson 1.50
Next Door. By Clara Louise Burnham 1.50
Eustis. By R. A. Boit . . 1.50
A Woman of Honor. By H. C. Bunner 1.25
Aubert Dubayet. By Chas. Gayarré 2.00
John Rantoul. By Henry Loomis Nelson 1.50
A Reverend Idol 1.50
Where the Battle was Fought. By Charles Egbert Craddock 1.50
Miss Ludington's Sister. By Edward Bellamy . . . 1.25
Eleanor Maitland. By Clara Erskine Clement 1.25
Her Washington Season. By Jeanie Gould Lincoln . 1.50
His Two Wives. By Mary Clemmer 1.50
Dr. Grimshawe's Secret. By Nathaniel Hawthorne . . 1.50
A Midsummer Madness. By Ellen Olney Kirk . . . 1.25

HENRY JAMES'S

Daisy Miller $1.50
The Siege of London . . . 1.50
The Author of Beltraffio . . 1.50
Tales of Three Cities . . . 1.50

MADELEINE VINTON DAHLGREN'S

A Washington Winter . . $1.50
The Lost Name 1.00
Lights and Shadows of a Life 1.50

BARRETT WENDELL'S

The Duchess Emilia . . . $1.00
Rankell's Remains 1.00

ROSE TERRY COOKE'S

The Sphinx's Children . . $1.50
Somebody's Neighbors . . 1.50
Happy Dodd 1.50

NORA PERRY'S

For a Woman $1.00
Book of Love Stories . . . 1.00
Tragedy of the Unexpected . 1.00

MR. HOWELLS'S NOVELS.

The Minister's Charge . . $1.50
Indian Summer 1 50
The Rise of Silas Lapham . 1.50
A Woman's Reason . . . 1.50
A Modern Instance 1.50
Dr. Breen's Practice . . . 1.50
A Fearful Responsibility . . 1.50

JULIAN HAWTHORNE'S

Love — or a Name $1.50
Fortune's Fool 1.50
Beatrix Randolph 1.50

EDGAR FAWCETT'S

The Confessions of Claud . $1.50
The House at High Bridge . 1.50
Tinkling Cymbals 1.50
Adventures of a Widow . . 1.50
Social Silhouettes 1.50

ROBERT GRANT'S

A Romantic Young Lady . $1.50
Confessions of a Frivolous Girl 1.25
An Average Man 1.50
The Knave of Hearts . . . 1.25

EDWARD KING'S

The Golden Spike $1.50
The Gentle Savage 2.00

E. W. HOWE'S

A Moonlight Boy $1.50
The Story of a Country Town 1.50
The Mystery of the Locks . 1.50

BLANCHE W. HOWARD'S

Guenn $1.50
Aulnay Tower 1.50
Aunt Serena 1.25

MARY HALLOCK FOOTE'S

John Bodewin's Testimony . $1.50
The Led-Horse Claim . . . 1.25

HENRY GREVILLE'S

Count Xavier $1.00
Dosia's Daughter 1.25
Cleopatra 1.25

FOUR LIBRARY CLASSICS.

FAMILIAR SHORT SAYINGS OF GREAT MEN.

By S. ARTHUR BENT, A. M. *Fifth Edition.* $2.00.

Indispensable to students, writers, and libraries. It gives a collection of short, sententious sayings of all times, such as are constantly referred to, but are not to be found in other books of reference. A short sketch of each speaker and the circumstances attending each remark is also given. The work is brought down to the latest time, quoting eighty authors not before included, and containing over three hundred new sayings from Agassiz, Choate, President Cleveland, Emerson, Evarts, Carlyle, Gladstone, Wellington, Parnell, etc.

"This admirably edited and amusing book." — *The Spectator, London.*

"The work is one of astonishing research. It is a most fascinating contribution." — *Philadelphia Press.*

"It is an exceedingly interesting volume, and fills a long-existing gap in our literature." — *Hon. S. A. Green.*

FAMILIAR ALLUSIONS. *A Handbook of Information.* By W. A. WHEELER and C. G. WHEELER. $2.00.

A unique and precious companion to the "Dictionary of Noted Names of Fiction." It includes terse and piquant descriptions of thousands of things continually met with in reading newspapers or books, but not to be found in gazetteers or encyclopædias, and often unfamiliar even to well-informed persons. Among these are Paintings: as Aurora, Slave Ship; Statuary: as Psyche, Clytie; Antiquities; Ruins; Palaces: as Holyrood Trianon; Museums: as Glyptothek, Uffizi; Cathedrals, Abbeys: as Kazan Cathedral, Westminster; Theatres, etc.: as Drury Lane, Guildhall, La Scala; Castles, Villas: as Pitti, Sunnyside, Chatsworth; Prisons: as Newgate, Bastille; Taverns: as Tabard, Star and Garter; Ships: as Bounty, Great Harry; Natural Curiosities: as Lorelei, Tarpeian Rock; Roads, Districts: as the Corso, Prado, Prater, Chiaja, Strand, Pall Mall, Appian Way, Seven Dials; Parks: as Bois de Boulogne, Boboli, Mabille; Clubs: as Beefsteak, Athenæum; Miscellaneous: as Bambino, Blarney Stone, Glastonbury Thorn, Salisbury Plain, Golden Horn, Bow Bells, etc.

EVENTS AND EPOCHS IN RELIGIOUS HISTORY.

By JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE. Illustrated. $2.00.

CONTENTS. — The Catacombs; The Buddhist Monks of Central Asia; The Christian Monks: Augustine, Anselm, Bernard; Jeanne d'Arc; Savonarola, Luther, Loyola; The Mystics: Neo-Platonists, German Pietists, Fénelon, Swedenborg, Emerson; George Fox; The Huguenots, Waldenses, Albigenses; John Wesley; The Moravians and Methodists.

THE COURSE OF EMPIRE.

Outlines of the Chief Political Changes in the History of the World. Arranged by Centuries with variorum illustrations, by CHARLES G. WHEELER. With 25 colored maps. 12mo. $2.00.

"A work of singular breadth, scope, and discrimination." — *Springfield Republican.*

"Much more useful than one could imagine." — *Boston Herald.*

A magnificent treasury of history. Twenty-five full-page colored maps, showing the governments of Europe and Asia in every century since 500 B. C., with chronological table, list of great men, and twenty-five pages or more of history of each century, with copious and vigorous quotations from Guizot, Macaulay, Milman, Lecky, Hallam, Gibbon, Livy, Grote, Buckle, Carlyle.

*** *For sale by booksellers, or will be sent, post-paid, on receipt of price, by the publishers,*

TICKNOR AND COMPANY, Boston.

PERSIA AND THE PERSIANS. By HON. S. G. W. BENJAMIN, late U. S. Minister to Persia. 8vo, with portrait and many illustrations, beautifully bound, gilt top. $5.00; in half-calf, $9.00.

"Mr. Benjamin's book has been to us particularly fascinating. The superb illustrations which are scattered lavishly throughout the pages contribute much to making the journey a delightful one. It is quite impossible to overestimate the pleasure to be derived from the pages of this volume, and almost as difficult to indicate how important and valuable the work is." — *The Capital, Washington.*

JAPANESE HOMES AND THEIR SURROUNDINGS. By EDWARD S. MORSE, Ph.D., Director of the Peabody Academy of Science, late Professor of Tokio University, Japan, etc. With 300 illustrations. 8vo. $5.00; in half-calf, $9.00.

"It is one of the most important of works ever written about one of the most fascinating of countries." — *Boston Herald.*

CHOSÖN: THE LAND OF THE MORNING CALM. A Sketch of Korea. By PERCIVAL LOWELL, late Foreign Secretary to the Korean Embassy, etc. Richly illustrated. 8vo. $5.00; in half-calf, $9.00.

"A great deal more than a mere narrative of residence in Korea. It goes to the bottom of the whole question of the main characteristics of the three far-Eastern nations, China, Japan, and Korea, mixing philosophical views, new information, personal recollections, and witty remarks in such fashion as to conciliate the tastes of all classes of readers. . . . Fortunately for the subject, it has been taken in hand by one who had the *verve* of youth allied with the curiosity of the scientist. These serve as torches that light up with a picturesque beauty the cavernous recesses of the Hermit Kingdom. . . . The extreme beauty of the illustrations." — *The Japan Gazette* (Yokohama).

DUE NORTH. By MATURIN M. BALLOU, author of "Due South," "Edge-tools of Speech," "Genius in Sunshine and Shadow." Attractive accounts of Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Christiania; chapters devoted to Bergen and Trondhjem; the Loffodens and Maelström; the North Cape and Midnight Sun; Lapland and Finland; St. Petersburg and Moscow; the Nova and Volga; Nijni-Novgorod; Warsaw and Russian Poland. $1.50.

"Bright and readable." — *Mass. Ploughman.*
"Charming, — an excellent book." — *B. P. Shillaber.*
"An ideal writer of books of travel." — *Boston Globe.*
"Captivates the attention and interest." — *The Watchman.*
"Of the finest and most extensive culture, Mr. Ballou is the ideal traveller." — *Boston Traveller.*
"The charm and interest of the entire volume." — *Boston Transcript.*

TUSCAN CITIES. By W. D. HOWELLS. 8vo. With many illustrations by JOSEPH PENNELL. Magnificently bound, with full gilt edges. In a neat box, $5.00; in antique morocco or tree-calf, $10.00.

Sold by booksellers. Sent, post-paid, on receipt of price, by the publishers,

TICKNOR AND COMPANY, Boston.

The Atlantic Monthly

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY stands for the most vigorous American thought on the most important subjects; and it holds fast to its lifelong aim to give this thought the best expression. Its field is as wide as contemporaneous activity.

Its first aim is Literature, — not dilettanteism, but a worthy expression of the most suggestive, mature thought. Whatever is instructive — especially whatever is suggestive, whether it take the form of action or of large tendencies of the time, or whether it be the result of research or of literary art — is taken up in its pages while it is uppermost in the public mind.

The ATLANTIC stands for manliness in literature, for accuracy and distinction in historical writing, for wholesomeness in fiction, for dignity and directness in essays, for the note of strength and health in poetry.

In education it stands for common sense, in religion for toleration and liberality, in politics for independence and public spirit, — all treated in a way that is not narrow nor sectional; for every part of the country makes its own contribution to national thought and character.

The effort of the ATLANTIC is to be a magazine that shall at once be a necessity and the pride of cultivated American readers.

---

35 cents a copy. **Send 10 cents for sample copy.** **$4.00 a year.**

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & CO., Boston, Mass.

New Books of Fiction

THE BATTLE OF THE STRONG

By GILBERT PARKER, author of "The Seats of the Mighty," etc. 12mo, $1.50.

Such a splendid story, so splendidly told, will be read with avidity. — *St. James's Gazette* (London).

This romance must be included among the three or four greatest fiction works of the year. It contains some of the best character drawing done by any living writer, and is a lasting contribution to romantic historical fiction. — *Chicago Evening Post.*

PRISONERS OF HOPE

By MARY JOHNSTON. With Frontispiece Illustration. Crown 8vo, $1.50.

Wonderfully dramatic and fascinating. The scene is laid in Colonial Virginia, in the days of Charles the Second, and the story is not only a sound piece of historical fiction, but a vigorous, forcible, stirring romance. — *Charleston News and Courier.*

It is, indeed, a work so nearly perfect of its kind — a kind so large and so fine and so noble — that the impulse is toward wholesale enthusiasm, regardless of any attempt at critical discrimination. — *The Bookman.*

Eminently readable, an admirably strong book. — *Philadelphia Press.*

THE PURITANS

By ARLO BATES, author of "The Pagans," "The Philistines," etc. Crown 8vo, $1.50.

All of the characters, all of the scenes and incidents, all of the impressions received, when taken together, form a whole that is a striking and notable drama of life. . . . This novel is Mr. Bates's masterpiece, and its place is among the best of recent American fiction. — *The Independent* (New York).

A LOVER OF TRUTH

By ELIZA ORNE WHITE, author of "Winterborough," "The Coming of Theodora," etc. 16mo, $1.25.

It is an acute and sympathetic study of the growth and expansion of a reserved, sensitive, and high-minded nature. Miss White delineates the still life of New England society with unfailing charms and geniality. — *The Spectator* (London).

A GREAT LOVE

By CLARA LOUISE BURNHAM, author of "Miss Archer Archer," "The Wise Woman," "Sweet Clover," etc. 16mo, $1.25.

Mrs. Burnham always tells her stories spiritedly and attractively, and in this instance of "a great love" she introduces elements and characters of more than strength and piquancy. — *Providence Journal.*

THE BLACK CURTAIN

By FLORA HAINES LOUGHEAD, author of "The Man Who Was Guilty." Crown 8vo, $1.50.

The stories of Southern California life that are really true to nature may be counted on the fingers of a single hand. To this small class of the elect must now be added "The Black Curtain." . . . The book is full of the influences of the California shine and the balsamic air of the coast range. It is sure to take its place as one of the best stories of the year. — *San Francisco Chronicle.*

THE BLINDMAN'S WORLD AND OTHER STORIES

By EDWARD BELLAMY, author of "Looking Backward." With a prefatory note by W. D. HOWELLS. 12mo, $1.50.

These fifteen stories are excellent illustrations of the quality which won for their possessor so vast an audience. — *New York Times.*

Sold by all Booksellers. Sent, postpaid, by

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & COMPANY, Boston

11 East 17th Street, New York